

*H. Jones*

THE  
VALE OF FELICITY,

OR,

*SYLVAN HAPPINESS:*

POURTRAYED IN

A SERIES OF LETTERS,

*MORAL AND ENTERTAINING.*

---

BY A LADY.

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Calm are the Pleasures of a rural Life,  
At Distance far from Folly, Noise, and Strife.

RETIRED PLEASURES.

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D U B L I N:

Printed for Messrs. P. BYRNE, P. WOGAN,  
R. GRUBER, W. MOORE, W. JONES,  
R. M'ALLISTER, and R. WHITE,

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A SERIES OF LETTERS

MORAL AND ENTERTAINING

BY A LADY

These are the letters of a lady who  
has been in the habit of writing to  
her friends for many years, and  
which are now published for the first time.

DUBLIN

Printed for Messrs. P. Byrne, P. Wood,  
N. Gurney, W. Moore, W. Jones,  
R. M. Martin, and R. White.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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T H E following Letters contain the genuine Correspondence of several amiable Ladies, describing the happiness of a Country Life, and the heartfelt pleasures of real Friendship; that the pourtray in lively colours the tranquil felicity of sylvan Retirement, must be acknowledged by every Reader, while they hold out and inculcate the most pleasing sentiments of Morality; particularly address to the BRITISH FAIR.

## ADVERTISEMENT

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THE  
VALE OF FELICITY.

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LETTER I.

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*T. W. to R. M.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WHEN you receive this, I hope I shall be something nearer than I have been for many years; at least, I hope no sea will interfere between our future correspondence, it being my intention, since Providence has blessed my industry with affluence, to settle and end my days in my native country: I was happy to hear you was settled, and long for a regular history of your singular situation, and the particular character of your amiable Patron.—I, likewise, have experienced

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perienced many, and extraordinary occurrences, since we parted from school, which, perhaps, may not be unentertaining to you; and, when I have fixed the spot for my residence, shall begin, with my friend's permission, a regular correspondence; till when, I expect you will prepare materials, and begin the work with a prefatory address to me in answer to this. I hope your sisters, whom I have not the happiness of knowing, are well; and shall rejoice in the pleasure of their acquaintance, especially as my sisters, who will return with me, desire to cultivate some female friendship; and they say, who so proper as my friend's relations, since they have no knowledge of any person now in England, as they were but infants when I took them to ——— with me. Therefore, I expect a favourable and quick answer, which you may direct for me at Dover, where I may stay, perhaps, a few weeks, till I meet with a situation to my mind. I remain, with sincere and lasting friendship,

Your's,

T. WARTON.

LETTER

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## LETTER II.

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*R. M. to T. W.*

I Received your's with the greatest pleasure ; especially as you inform me, that we shall not be separated any more by the boisterous seas ; therefore, hope it will not be long ere we shall personally renew that friendship which has so long lain dormant, but which in youth was carried on with ardour.

I most sincerely congratulate you on your increase of fortune : Knowing the innate goodness of heart which you possessed in youth, am persuaded you will be a faithful steward with your talent in riper years ; and, as you seem to desire a particular history of my situation, and character of my Noble Patrons, think you were not a little self-interested by the request. Be that as it may, I forgive you  
B 2 knowing,

knowing, that you will not only take the precept, but practice the example.

From your desire to form an acquaintance among the female branches of our families, you seem to anticipate every wish of me and mine.—Your sisters are mine already, mine are your's, and they ardently long for an opportunity to commence a correspondence. To hasten which, I have it in commission to send a most particular invitation for all the females you have brought over with you, to sojourn with us till you have fixed your residence; and my sisters say, they absolutely will not be refused—so, preparations are making, and they must bring the answer with them; therefore, beg our best respects to all, and am, dear Sir,

Your's,

R. MITFORD.

LETTER

## LETTER III.

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*M. W. to T. W.*

DEAR BROTHER,

**W**E arrived safe on Saturday night, after a great fatigue, which was amply made amends for by your worthy friends, the first hour of our coming amongst them. The politeness of our reception, the refined elegance of manners, the admirable neatness of the place, and hospitality of the owners, are far beyond the description of my pen. Suffice it to say, we are all wonder and ecstasy; and we only wish you here, to be fully sensible of the merits of the incomparable inhabitants of this delightful village. I know not what to call it; for it surpasses every idea I could ever form of this terrestrial world. The order, neatness, affability, condescension, and good-humour which pervade



vade every one, from the amiable Lord and Lady of the Manor down to the veriest rustic, for I must not say lowest, as there are no poor properly so called, nor disorderly persons, in this place.

I hope my dear brother will come and take a survey of this wonder of the world; and take, even if it is but a faint copy, to draw out his plans upon, as he is beginning, as it were, a new life; and though I would not be thought envious, yet, I confess, I think it a pity there should be but one place like it. But I crave your pardon for advising; and, for the present, conclude, wishing you every success, and a speedy settlement in likeness to this. My sister must send her opinion next post, for we cannot possibly be both writing at once. Adieu, dear brother.

Your affectionate sister,

M. WARTON.

LETTER

## LETTER IV.

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*GEORGIAN WARTON*

TO

*T. WARTON.*

**E**XCUSE my seeming neglect in not sending you by last post; but my sister informed you we could not both spare time for writing at once; and as we are closely in confidence, and know each others thoughts, I shall not run over the same track Maria did in her's, as both our sentiments are equal in respect to this eighth wonder of the world; therefore shall begin with an account of the day after our arrival.

It was Sunday; at seven o'Clock in the morning we were all summoned to prayer, which was performed with great devotion in my Lord's private chapel, (to which

there is a private door from Mr. M's house) by one of my Lord's Chaplains; and to which as many of the villagers as choose may come; and the greatest part of them, I am informed, generally attend. After prayers we went to breakfast, about half past eight, and then retired to dress for the church, which is at some distance from the village, and where we heard a most excellent discourse from my Lord's Chaplain; for I should have told you, that my Lord and Lady have each of them one; the other read prayers: In the afternoon, my Lady's preached, and my Lord's read prayers. Perhaps you may think me too particular, but I think I cannot. The church is fitted up in the neatest manner, and there is an excellent organ; the younger part of the villagers, of both sexes, make an excellent choir, assisted by the two schools, of which you may hear more hereafter.

After service, we returned to dinner, and one of the Divines with us, a most amiable and accomplished man he seems; and your friends here say they are both  
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an honour to the cloth. The rule is, one to dine at my Lord's, and the other at Mr. M's, every Sunday alternately; and, in my opinion, a most excellent method to preserve decency and religious decorum.

On that day the conversation was truly edifying, without being dull or tedious; the chearful, lively manner in which every one bore a part, had the most happy effect; and the Rev. Mr. Dean has the most delightful method you can possibly conceive of correcting an erroneous word, or checking an opinion repugnant to the principles of religion and the sanctity of his profession.

Well, after an hour or two's conversation, we returned to church to the afternoon service, and from thence took a delightful walk round the park, which is composed of such beauties as I shall not pretend to make you anticipate, before you par-



take of its pleasures. I now think it high  
time to subscribe myself,

Your's affectionately,

G. WARTON.

LETTER

## LETTER V.

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*T. WARTON*

TO

*GEORGIAN AND MARIA WARTON.*

WITH what exquisite pleasure, my dearest sister, do I peruse your most agreeable account of your present situation. I am, I can assure you, almost ready to participate of your happiness before I have finished my business of settling; but the delay would be inexcusable while we are so separated; I think, however, I shall soon make up my mind on this affair, as I have seen several places I approve of, but should have been glad had you both been with me in choosing, though I would not wish to interrupt the felicity you have just begun to taste.—Whenever I send, you must  
let

let Mrs. Herbert come, for I shall be absolutely lost without some of you.

I make one letter serve you both, to be revenged on you for not both writing by one post; but suppose when I get among you, I shall find your excuses ready. Present my sincere respects to all your amiable friends, and believe me your forlorn brother, till I see you all.

T. WARTON.

LETTER

## LETTER VI.

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*MARIA WARTON*

TO

*T. WARTON.*

POOR FORLORN BROTHER,

**D**O make haste, and come among us ;  
but, above all things, I charge you,  
for our sakes, for love's sake, and for  
your own, to keep your heart whole and  
entire. I know it came safe to England,  
but pronounce it for ever ruined, if you  
bring it not safe to this Vale of Felicity.  
We must spare Herbert—but that is all  
—so, adieu. We are all well.

M. WARTON.



## LETTER VII.

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*R. MITFORD*

TO

*T. WARTON.*

**T**H E most sincere thanks do I return my friend, for his kind compliance in obliging us with his amiable sisters; they are, indeed amiable and lovely. My sister declares so firm an attachment, that I apprehend it will be no easy matter to separate them, nor do I wish it. As to Mrs. Herbert, she seems to be an extraordinary being; and I wonder not, that under so judicious a person, the accomplishments of your sisters are so conspicuous. I understand there is something strange in her history, which I have not yet learnt, but

but may expect it, I suppose when you commence your's.

Receive our utmost acknowledgments and respects; and have the happiness of stiling myself

Your inviolable friend,

R. MITFORD.

P. S. We long to see you here.

LETTER

## LETTER VIII.

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*T. WARTON*

TO

*GEORGIAN AND MARIA WARTON.*

DEAR SISTERS,

I Have at last accomplished my purpose, and hope I have suited all your tastes by my choice. Maria, I think, seems more in love with the Parsonage House than mine, as she speaks so highly of the Reverend Divine. I make not the least doubt of his being deserving of all her praise ; and should not have taken any notice of it, only as she desired me to keep my heart till I come among you. I needed not that advice, for mine has been there ever since my return to England's happy shore ; and I hope to be with you on Wednesday next for two or three day's. I have, I assure  
you

you, seen nothing yet which would endanger my peace ; yet seem apprehensive of the consequences of this visit ; therefore hope you will prepare the way for me. Make my best respects to all. I remain,

Your's, at present,

T. WARTON.



## LETTER IX.

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*MISS SELINA MITFORD*

TO

*MISS HUET.*

O H! my dear Huet, I received your's with joy and sorrow, and acknowledge you have had reason apparently to doubt my friendship, but spare me this once, and be assured I know no diminution of friendship, to you, and will never again give you cause to suspect it, I have new friends, 'tis true, and my friends must and shall be your's, for I will know none else, and to that end I make you my confidant in love, as well as friendship. Upon Wednesday last, oh, day of days, it gave an additional happiness to our delightful village, by the arrival of, dare I say more than man—No, it was a man, in whom all the elegance of nature and art seems combined

combined to make him perfect, my dear Kitty, that made an impression I never before experienced, on my mind, heart and senses, almost instantaneously.—indeed, the account his sisters gave of him operated powerfully before he came, for you must know it is my new friends' brother; and I am ashamed to say, I was almost unable to conceal my emotion. On Saturday, or Monday, he leaves us, but not me in suspense, for his amiable sister, Georgian, told me the day after his arrival, that she hoped my heart was disengaged, and told me her brother was my professed admirer from the first moment he saw me, and pleaded so powerfully for me to admit of him, that I was almost incapable of resisting. She flew to him, and the first opportunity after, which she took care to make so, on led the adorable man to my feet,—and, with the most modest and affecting grace, humbly pleaded the bewitching power of love, and vowed eternal fidelity; told me I was the only fair that ever had the least influence over him; that, though it was sudden, it was because he had never seen perfection before, as he

was

was pleased to term it, and that if I could excuse his want of eloquence to plead his own cause, he would present a heart untainted by the vices of the age; a heart always attached to my family, always having a presentiment for an attachment to what belonged to his friend, and assured me he made England his peculiar desire on that account; that though he, in seeing my brother's family, did not expect to be soon captivated, yet thought he should meet a partner for life, capable at least of being a friend, and begged that if I could not love him, if my heart was not engaged, that I would not suffer him to despair.

This, my friend, was the substance of this incomparable man's discourse; and, for the soul of me, I could not carry female decorum so far as to deny a partiality for him.

Surely there must be something more than ordinary in love like our's—so sudden, so unexpected, and I hope and think happiness must go with and remain with

us:

us : he gained my consent to ask my brother's permission, though I am under no apprehensions on that head, as I know his regard for him is unbounded. I hope my dear friend will take this as an excuse, and I beg you will never accuse my friendship any more.

I am ever

Your's,

SELINA MITFORD.

LETTER



## LETTER X.

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MISS SELINA MITFORD  
TO  
MISS HUET.

WELL, now I hope my friend will not complain of inattention, since I take the most early opportunity of acquainting you with my progress in matters of love; for, between that and friendship, I am all taken up. Mr. Warton made his sad case known to my brother, who you know, is a true philanthropist, and, therefore, could by no means suffer a fellow-being to remain in misery.—No; he promised him a speedy relief, but assured him at the same time, that his sister had been so long with him, and so useful to the village, that he could by no means possibly spare her but on one condition.

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“And what can that be?” Warton eagerly cried. “Any thing in my power must “and shall be done to remedy any inconvenience. Tell me the conditions asked, “nor keep me longer in suspense.”

“Why then,” replied he, “I must have “an exchange ; your sister Georgina claims “all my respect and love ; that agreed “between us, all is settled.”

With what joy and rapture did Warton receive this intimation.—“And can my “dear friend think,” said he, “that I wanted a moment to consider of the happiest “event of my life? If my sister receives “your affection becoming her, she is ten “thousand times dearer to me than ever.”

So now you see we are like to have a double wedding, and I shall insist on it that you make one among us : we have not yet settled the time, but my next, perhaps may acquaint you more about it. Adieu.

SELINA MITFORD.

LETTER

## LETTER XI.

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MISS HUET  
TO  
MISS SELINA MITFORD.

RECEIVE, my dear friend, my most sincere congratulations on any addition to your happiness, especially of that kind you are so obliging as to communicate to me. I hope you pardon freely my unkind thoughts of you, and promise never more to offend. I am highly pleased at the account of your friends, and long to be introduced to them, as I have a strong partiality already for them, am particularly delighted at the thoughts of a double union, and think, with you, happiness will attend your sympathetic affection, the genuine source of matrimonial felicity.

I think, however, you are too extravagant in your description of Mr. Warton, yet  
can

can easily excuse you, since I am pretty confident he is your first love. I suppose a difference of years betwixt you: now I always would wish my husband (should I ever have the good fortune to get one) to be, at least, ten years older than myself: but you seem to forget any particulars of that kind, and likewise to mention how your friend receives your brother's addresses—quite silent with respect to your friend Maria, and your own sister, who appears forgotten in general.—Is it really so, or does your own approaching happiness render you indifferent to every thing else? I imagine the latter to be the efficient cause—my Lord and Lady are now no more, though all your former letters were full of their praises, and the delightful wonders of your village; but all are now obscured by almighty Love.

I have got my mamma's permission to wait on you, when you are pleased to send the summons, in expectation of being honoured as a bride's maid—till then adieu.

Your's.

P. S. Pray my best respects to all.

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LETTER



## LETTER XII.

MR. WARTON  
TO  
MRS. AUSTIN.

DEAR SISTER,

**I**N the name of myself and sisters, I acquaint you with our safe arrival, not only in England, but nearly on the land of matrimony. I thought it, considering our mutual love, little less than a duty we owe to one of the best of sisters, to acquaint you before we cast anchor in the haven of happiness, which we have the most flattering ideas of speedily attaining. You will be, no doubt, surprised to hear we have made so great a progress in so short a time, but the wonder will cease when you are informed of the particulars.

My

My dear friend Mitford, whom you have often heard me mention with delight, is the destined husband of our Georgian; and your brother, in exchange, takes his lovely and amiable sister Selina. Maria is charmed with a young divine, whom we think to make happy by a provision among us, as he has only virtue and merit for his portion, which, I believe you will say with me, is a sufficient recommendation for the assistance of the affluent.—I know my dear sister will rejoice with us all on this occasion, and all our desire now is that you and your beloved were among us, to partake of our joy.—We hope the dear pledges of your affections are both well, and depend on your promise to permit them to receive their education among us.—Accept, dear sister, with your spouse, all our sincere and unabated love, with kind respects from all those we have the honour to be among; wishing you a lasting happiness; and that it may be no long time ere you and your's may come and so-

jour among us.—I cannot, at present, give you any particulars of my situation—other matters engross my whole attention, but will take an early opportunity.—Farewell, till I can sign

T. AND SELINA WARTON.

LETTER

## LETTER XIII.

*MISS SELINA MITFORD*

TO

*MISS HUET.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I Have now sent you, what I know you ardently desired, a summons to attend our Vale of Felicity. I acknowledge your just reproof of the different tendency of my letters now and formerly; and, with shame confess, I have been wanting to the best and most generous of human excellence, my Lord and Lady, who, I must now acquaint you, have taken an active part in the approaching happiness of our family; and I have more news to add, which is the marriage of the Rev. Mr. Dean with one you do not know, but will very soon, I mean my friend Maria Warton. It is the

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pleasure



pleasure of our noble patrons to have all the nuptials solemnized at once, and I hear there are none in the village in agitation. Mr. Dean and Maria, however, were very close in their amours; for he is wholly dependant on my Lord, he smothered his growing passion; but the sagacity of other lovers soon discovered the mutual attachment between them, and made known the dreadful secret. Mr. Dean is all modesty, but our brother means to act noble towards him, and he certainly is a man of great merit. As to my sister, the object of her fixed affections is far from home, but she has good hope of his speedy return to crown her happiness. I wish you would bring some one to reside among us, and then methinks I should be well pleased. I return my sincere thanks to your mamma, for her kind indulgence in permitting you to come, however, and beg my love to your sister. Be very quick in coming, for the happy day is fixed: I know not how I shall get through it.

Mr. Warton and M<sup>s</sup>. Hester are gone to prepare the house for my Ladyship's reception; as, to be sure, he will have every thing

thing in order, not to fatigue his best beloved. That this, my dear, may be yours as well as my happy lot, will be always the earnest wish of

Your

SELINA MITFORD.

P. S. We all join in respectful love to you.

## LETTER XIV.

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*MARIA WARION*

TO

*MR. WARTON.*

**O**H! my ever dear, ever indulgent brother, how shall I by words or actions, ever in any part acknowledge the infinity of my obligations to you or your beloved friend. No words nor pen can paint the never-ceasing gratitude of myself and Mr. Dean: but must leave him to speak for himself, since I find at present a heart so overflowing with veneration for all and every thing around me, that I am really incapable of thinking, or acting in any manner as I ought to do, but am certain my dear brother participates every joy of his sisters, and I trust they

they equally do in his approaching happiness with the most amiable of women.

Sure never was one family in prospect of so much supreme happiness, as at present awaits us. My Lord with a condescension only peculiar to himself, has kindly offered to give you your amiable spouse, and your happy sisters also to theirs—haste, my dear brother, for there is a vacuum without you.

We all regret my Lord has signified his wishes that our nuptials be performed in his private chapel, by Mr. Spicer, on a Sunday: at the same time four other young couple of the village are to be made happy with each other by his bounty.

In honour of us, he at the same time proposes that we should strictly conform to the Church of England's intent, in all attending the communion after our nuptial benedictions; as, he observes, a happy and good beginning is likely to be productive of permanent felicity. We



all agree with one consent to so good,  
so proper a proposition.

Great preparations are making for a general rejoicing on the approaching week, and every creature seems indeed to partake of it.

Adieu, my most dear brother, with love to Mrs. Herbert, whom I hope you will not fail to bring with you, and accept the same from all.

Yours,

MARIA WARTON.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

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*MR. WARTON.*

TO

*MR. MITFORD.*

DEAR FRIEND,

FROM my sister Maria I have the satisfaction of hearing that best of men's intention with respect to the celebration of our nuptial day. Nothing could be more congenial to my warmest wishes; and since all of you, as well as the partner of my heart, approve of it, what can be more appropriate to the occasion, than that we dedicate the day, which we hope will be the happiest of our lives, to Him, who, in the wise dispensations of his providential care, has thought fit to bless us in each other, and that in circumstances of ease and affluence. I do not mean the only happy day.

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(God forbid) but the beginning of a lasting happiness—an object truly desirable to every Christian.

My Lord and Lady are entitled to our sincere thanks, for thus presenting us with every thing good and agreeable.

I have received a letter from the Reverend Mr. Dean, full of modest, but grateful acknowledgements: I should be glad to dispense with them, as I am certain I can do no more than my duty. Oh, what a valuable acquisition such a friend and brother!

I think the greatest care I have had is now over, which was, to see my beloved sisters all happy and settled: It was my fixed determination never to sway or cross their inclinations, since I knew the innate goodness of their hearts would not suffer them to make an improper choice. My sister Anna has met with a worthy man, who adores her, and of whom you will  
be

be more informed of when we relate our promised Memoirs, which had, perhaps, ere this been far advanced, had we never seen the Vale of Felicity, nor been prevented by all conquering Love.

My habitation is tolerable well settled by the exertions of my good Mrs. Herbert; and we hope to be with you on Friday at farthest. You will oblige me by delivering those small caskets to our respective brides, according to directions; and beg you will spare any one the trouble of noticing them, further than obliging the donor by wearing them on the bridal day.

Accept a small token of esteem yourself; and, with the greatest submission, I entreat you will present my Lord and Lady a similar token. I should be unpardonable to forget your amiable sister Matilda, and our brother Dean. His I would not have you present till after the ceremony.

I have been thus particular, because  
I do



I do not desire any interruption of the happiness I fondly anticipate in your company and conversation, when I come among you.

My cordial and respectful love to all,  
and I remain in the strictest bonds.

T. WARTON.

LETTER

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LETTER XVI.

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*MISS MATILDA MITFORD*

TO

*MISS ARABELLA FOSTER.*

DEAR FOSTER,

**I**N my last I acquainted you with the change that was going to be among us, as well as with the character of our amiable friends, and the preparations which were making for the celebration of the nuptials of seven couple; no common thing in history, I believe. And now I take the the earliest opportunity of informing you of the great event taking place.

Mr. Warton arrived here on Thursday evening last, to the great joy of the whole village;

village; the people of which, on hearing of his arrival, flocked about our house, and expressed their satisfaction in loud and reiterated huzzas; the church bells were set a ringing, and every demonstration of joy was exhibited among the happy villagers. After a short time had past, he appeared in the balcony, and in an affecting speech, fraught with good sense and politeness, thanked them for the good-will they had shewn towards him; at the same time assuring them, he should endeavour to become acquainted with the whole of them before he left the happy Vale. The people then dispersed with countenances expressive of happiness, and without that noisy tumult and disorder which generally mark numerous meetings on similar occasions.

On Friday he paid a short visit to Lord and Lady —, as we afterwards understood, to settle some pecuniary matters for the young couples who were to be united. He returned to our house to dinner; when, I can assure you, we enjoyed a degree of social pleasure and happiness, before

before unknown even to us. Saturday was no less agreeably spent, though, you may depend upon it, we were all busily employed.

Miss Huet and myself were up at day-break on Sunday, to attend the blooming brides; and about eight the important business of the toilet was settled. Indeed, my dear Foster, it was an enviable sight—but why should we envy?—No, the sight was delightful—they were all attired in white, pure and spotless as their virgin honour, and the elegance of art, blended with the simplicity of Nature, heightened their general appearance. The generous and noble Warton had sent a casket of jewels to each, of equal beauty and value, with which they were adorned; and, perhaps the Graces were never more conspicuously seen than in these three lovely nymphs; but far beyond the lustre of these glittering ornaments appeared their native and becoming modesty—a gem the brightest that can grace a woman.

A little after eight, my Lord and Lady did us the honour of breakfasting with us, as did also the four young couple of the village,



village arrayed for the occasion, according to my Lady's order ; who indeed provided them for the occasion. Sure, never was a sight like this ! Kings might with pleasure have foregone their regal pomp, and been proud to have joined the happy throng ; all was chearfulness, mingled with respect, on that day, I assure you. The affability of our Noble Patrons, who are quite alike to all on such occasions, reflects an honour upon them, more to be prized than the laurelled hero's fame.

Mr. Spicer attended, and made a short prayer suitable to the day and occasion ; and as soon as breakfast was over we retired to the Chapel. The parents, brothers, sisters, and other relations of the village couples were permitted to be present at the ceremony, and each father gave away his daughter ; but as to ours, Lord — took that on himself. I trembled for all the brides ; who did not behave so well, I think, as you and I should, had it been our lot ; but we must forgive them and

and allow a little for female squeamishness.

Mr. Warton and my dear Selina were first bound in the Hymeneal chain; my brother and the beautiful Georgian an next; and then our Reverend Divine and the sprightly Maria; after them the four other happy pairs, according to their ages. When the ceremony was over, my Lord, with a gallantry and complacency peculiar to himself, saluted the blushing brides all round, and then escorted us back, as we went, through the private door.

After an hour's sprightly chat, we separated till service, when one and all received, by the hands of Mr. Spicer, the holy Communion. We attended service that day only at my Lord's chapel, and we dined at my brother's: My Lord thought it best to keep our rustic companions with us, to prevent any disorder on that day. Our patron retiring about nine o'clock, the happy villagers took their leave; and I assure, you no description of my pen can do justice to the harmony of the day. We  
withdrew

withdrew our blushing beauties about ten o'clock, and the gentlemen were not long in breaking from each other.

Thus have I given you a faint idea of this day's joy and solemnity; but my next will, perhaps, entertain you better, though I do not say we all think so. I forgot a chief article, so must tell you now. After dinner, the generous Warton gave, by my brother's hand, a packet to Mr. Dean, containing Bank notes to the amount of two thousand pounds; as a marriage dowry, and the presentment of a living, which he has purchased, in the manor he has taken, of £.300 yearly value, and to each of the four couple, £.50 each; to this generous donation bestowed on the young people, my Lord contributed his mite; such as furnishing a cottage, and procuring a cow, with other necessary trifles, just, as he says, to begin the world with. The gratitude of these people may be easier conceived than described; therefore, I forbear troubling you with more on that head.

I must, notwithstanding, acquaint you with Warton's noble behaviour to your friend.

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friend. You know that Selina and myself had each one thousand pounds left by our honoured parent; and this generous man has not only made a voluntary settlement on Selina of five hundred pounds per annum during life, and her eldest daughter after her, should she be so happy as to have one, but presented unworthy me with the whole of my sisters fortune.

Can it be possible to express a gratitude equal to so exalted, disinterested an act of generosity and benevolence? No; it is beyond my power; I cannot do it—words would vainly be expressed to convey my ideas of it; and when it awakens my remembrance, I am lost in wonder and astonishment, and melt in love and ecstasy at the pleasing recollection.

This exalted character, who unites in himself all the various qualities praise-worthy in man, has informed my brother it hurts him not that he is possessed of abundance, as the utmost of his wishes are to become a good and useful member of society, and from a retrenchment of his  
own



own superfluities to administer to the wants and necessities of others.

Such unexampled worth and modesty, perhaps, never inhabited the breast of one man. Happy Selina, to be in such possession; but I believe their affection is truly mutual! they seem born to adore each other. I am called; so once more adieu.

Your's ever,

M. MITFORD.

LETTER

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## LETTER XVII.

*MISS MATILDA MITFORD*

TO

*MISS ARABELLA FOSTER.*

DEAR FOSTER,

**I** PROMISED my dear friend, a continuance of our rural history, from the commencement of the happiness, I trust, of seven virtuous and blooming couples, fastened in the soft Hymeneal chains in one happy hour. To proceed then with my narrative—The morning was ushered in with the ringing of bells, and an universal holiday through our happy vale: Every rustic and his favoured nymph were clad in a neat and uniform apparel, provided by my Lady, privately for the occasion. Our brides came forth, arrayed in fresh  
and

and blooming beauties, like the sun emerging from the eastern skies; the worthy bridegrooms had by appointment rose early, to concert the measures for this day of foyful festivity, but our noble Patrons had prevented even the possibility of a wish, by a kind and general invitation to their mansion. Dinner was splendid, and not a person of any consequence was excused.

You must remember, that on these occasions all distinction is laid aside; Hymen's new votaries, and the modesty of the villagers, would have been gladly excused; yet the affability of all seemed to vie with each other in making this beginning of their happiness equally agreeable to them as our more exalted ones.

As you are so well acquainted with the generous hospitality of our noble entertainers, it is unnecessary for me to enter into the particulars of the dinner; but cannot help mentioning how agreeably our ears were saluted by an unexpected  
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band of music, which his Lordship's care had selected for our amusement.

After an hour's agreeable and lively conversation, a walk was proposed, in the course of which we were surprised by the appearance of about fifty or sixty beautiful children, of both sexes, from the schools, arrayed in white, with favors, and ranged in couples, to strew flowers before us to a beautiful lawn behind the house, where a dinner had been provided and demolished, unknown to us. The villagers placed themselves all around, and with a chearful joy bade us hearty welcome with repeated plaudits: lemonade, orgeat, and negus, were then handed round by these charming children, and the Rev. Mr. Spicer made a most pathetic speech on the occasion of the meeting, recommending sobriety, order, and chearfulness; after which the children repeated a pastoral, descriptive of the event, in a manner that would have done credit to the ablest teacher, and which really astonished us. We partook of coffee and tea amongst



them, and our music attending, we were summoned to dance.

My Lord was pleased to open the ball with the beautiful Georgian, and Mitford led out Miss Huet; my Lord insisted on leading all the brides a minuet, so Warton took your friend; and sure there never was a more delightfully happy scene.

My Lady, to honour, as she said, the festival, walked out with the graceful modest Dean, and though both unused to the practice, the one from inclination, and the other from a consciousness of his sacred function, acquitted themselves to admiration.

His Lordship, danced separately with every charming bride—"And now said he, I have performed my best, I'll leave you all at liberty to chuse partners for the rest of the evening"—Warton then took out the accomplished Miss Huet, Selina and Mr. Dean, Mr. Singer, the organist, and Maria, Mr. Spicer and me, Mr. Alfred, a friend of my brother's, and

and Georgian, and the other young couple! each changed their mate for a few hours, and we continued dancing till the approach of night. On a summons for supper, we retired to a small distance from the lawn, where, under canopies a cold collation was served for the whole village; and such regularity and decorum sure never was before witnessed.

After supper, his Lordship conducted us into an orchestra, furnished with every instrument; and, he said, as he knew we were all professors of that delightful science, he would accompany our voices and instruments on the bass viol, as a treat that could not fail, from its novelty, delighting every hearer.—My brother took the flute, Mr. Warton the hautboy, Mr. Singer an horn, to some small distance; Georgian played the harpsichord divinely, Maria the piano forte, Selina the harp, Miss Huet the lute, and myself the guitar; Mr. Alfred the violin, and the two Reverend Gentlemen played on the German flute: We all accompanied with our voices; and the astonished

villagers lost none of the harmonious sounds. Her Ladyship declared she never was more happy, nor she believed nothing could be better adapted to please and delight the villagers.

I forgot, I believe, to mention that the park was superbly illuminated ; its grandeur and striking effect exceeded every description. The caution observed by these best of people in the management of the whole, prevented any from intruding but those for whom it was intended. We had every refreshment in the greatest abundance, and retired about twelve, amidst the heartfelt acclamations of the multitude who were assembled.

In further celebration of these happy events, we are to have a ball, to which all the neighbouring Gentry will be invited : Much should I rejoice could you make one of the party ; but as that is impossible, I must submit to lament what I cannot enjoy, the honour of your company, which is at all times a source of pleasure to me, but would be particularly

larly so on this occasion.—you shall not, however, be without an account of the festivity—that task I impose on myself, to the best of my poor abilities. Believe me, my ever dear friend,

Your's affectionately,

M. MITFORD.



## LETTER XVIII.

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*MISS MITFORD*

TO

*MISS FOSTER,**in Continuation.*

I Closed my last letter with an account of Monday's festival; which, though not so magnificent as Tuesday's, yet, I believe, afforded much more true happiness. His Lordship had sent a card of general invitation to all the Nobility and Gentry for many miles round the country, to partake of a ball in honour of our dear friends, at his own Assembly Room, and an elegant supper at his house. The company assembled early, and were refreshed with coffee, tea, &c. &c. in the pavillions which we made use of on Monday for our

our rural pastimes. The company were near three hundred in number; and a great concourse of people assembled to behold the enlivening scene. Our amiable brides would gladly have declined the intended honour, but none were excused; even the villagers were not forgotten, being, at the earnest request of the whole company, sent for; their truly simple and amiable manners won the hearts of the great; and Lord ———, and Mr. Warton's generous conduct having got wind, was made an example. The Duke of M——, with a most bewitching accent, entreated the company to imitate their benevolent act, and immediately, with the utmost grace and condescension, commenced the subscription, by putting five guineas into a flower basket, and became the humble advocate of rural innocence and love; in which he so well succeeded, as to collect near one hundred pounds, which he divided equally; then taking his own purse, and entreating for three others, in the most affable manner saluted the brides,

presenting each of them with a purse, and promised to be god-father to the first child that came among them.—Lord Townly followed the Duke, and with the greatest good nature, promised to become sponsor to the second, and bring a god-mother with him, which he supposed his Grace had forgot, but would no doubt rectify. His Grace immediately replied he certainly would, and cordially thanked his Lordship for the hint.

This gallantry in these two Noblemen spread like lightening throughout the room, and the gentlemen became emulous who should have the like privilege to the remaining two couples; when Lord ———, in the most agreeable and lively manner, proposed they should be candidates, and the fair part of the company voters. This motion meeting with general approbation, the election speedily commenced, and the greatest shew of fair hands being declared in favour of the Marquis of

of T——, and Sir Charles Saville, those gentlemen were declared duly elected; and the Honourable Miss Jervoise desiring the office of Secretary, immediately registered their names in her memorandum book, which was copied by most present.

You may be assured, my dear friend, that during this agreeable contest, the young and amiable couple were not without manifest confusion, which was increased by the compliment paid to them by the Ladies and Gentlemen, who all declared they should be happy to attend the sacred ceremony, which Lord——, our hospitable entertainer, promised, should such an event take place again; which was, to invite the present company to attend; and added, that he hoped some of our own dear friends might be ready by that time to take a part on the occasion; and did not doubt, should they all want it, there would be candidates enough to be found.



My Lord then begged permission for the young villagers to retire, as he was confident the unbounded generosity and good humour of the company had overwhelmed them with gratitude.—This request was, at length, reluctantly complied with, and the good wishes of the whole attended their departure.—You may believe our beloved friends had no small share of the general congratulation; and the tribute was not constrained, but flowed spontaneously from the heart. Such emanations of the mind cannot be described by words, I shall therefore give you a list of our handsome partners, and an account of the dancing.

The Duke entreated of my brother the favour of Georgian's hand, which was readily complied with; and the accomplished Marquis of T—— took Selina; Sir Charles Saville danced with Maria, and Lord Townly your humble servant, who bestowed many compliments, and said a number of agreeable things. But, believe me, my heart was far from  
this

this place of joy ; therefore paid no more than a polite attention to what he said ; though, I think, had Captain Williams been my partner on this happy event, I could with pleasure have listened to all he might have said to me ; but this was not the case ; however, I will give my Lord the credit of being an accomplished man, capable of attaching a heart not already disposed of, by his superior attractions and affable manners.

Sir George Montague paid uncommon attention to Miss Huet, whom you must acknowledge, both from her natural charms, and acquired accomplishments, is a most amiable and engaging young woman ; and I assure you she is equal in the esteem of all your friends in the Vale of Felicity, for now our village is called by no other name ; nor can any other name be more aptly applied to the happiness of its inhabitants.

Pardon the digression ; but I must acquaint you, that we all performed wonders ;

wonders; though I will not pretend to inform you of every pair that danced, or to class the partners; suffice it that I acquaint you of the circle of our intimates. My brother opened the ball with the celebrated Miss Coke, of Coke-Hall, a lady no less remarkable for her beauty than her coquetry; but the grace which she displayed on this occasion, seemed to ravish every beholder. There were about four or five minuets danced, and then country-dances began, which were kept up with great spirit till half past one, when our company was desired into the supper room. This was elegantly decorated, and every delicacy in season decked the table. About four o'clock, as the Sun was rising in all his eastern splendour, our noble company broke up, amply gratified with the hospitable entertainment; which, altogether, exceeded any thing ever seen at this place.

As soon as usual visits of formality are over, we are going on a party of pleasure

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pleasure to the metropolis, Lady Savoy having most politely offered us the use of her house during our stay, which we most cordially accepted. So, if you hear no more of us till we get to London, or, for ought I know, till we return, you must not be surprised, for I fear I shall have little or no time for communication before. However, if opportunity offer, I shall not fail to oblige my dear Foster.

M. MITFORD.

LETTER



## LETTER XIX.

~~MISS MATILDA MITFORD~~

TO

MISS ARABELLA FOSTER.

MY DEAR FOSTER,

THE die is cast; and your Selina now—oh, what shall I say she is! —Why, I hope firmly fixed in the seat of happiness for life, in the silken band of Hymen. Little did I think, when last I saw my valuable and dear friend, that my heart would have taken so sudden a flight from its habitation, much less that I would so soon become a wife; but when the amiable and gentle Warton pleaded the cause of Love, what maid could

LETTER

could hear without emotion, especially your Selina, who, perhaps, was first enraptured at his appearance; though if I may believe what I ought from his generous behaviour, the little blind God did not do his work by halves, since both seemed captivated in the same moment; and, indeed, I am his past redemption, nor have I even the power of repentance, so great is my happiness, and that not altogether on my own account; for my brother, the same moment that possessed me of Warton, gave to me a sister, in espousing my husband's sisters who may be stiled perfection; and our worthy Mr. Dean shares every conjugal felicity with another sister of my adored husband's. Our happiness is complete. Let me entreat you to join the joyful band at Lady Savoy's, in London, till when I shall leave you to form your own opinion of this memorable event. Adieu.

I am for ever,

Your's,

SELINA WARTON.

LETTER

## LETTER XX.

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*MRS. WARTON.*

TO

*MISS HUET.*

**A**FTER travelling near two days, we wanted nothing but the company of our dear Miss Huet to add to our agreeable journey. We arrived in the metropolis, and found every thing, by order of the polite Lady Savoy, in compleat readiness for our reception, for which her Ladyship is certainly entitled to our warmest gratitude.

Mr. Warton has not been in London for a number of years, and his sisters never; therefore we perhaps should have been in a disagreeable situation, had we been

been obliged to have procured lodgings for ourselves, being as you know, totally unacquainted with these things.

The agreeable Miss Foster joined us two days after our arrival, by my sister's invitation (who, you know, are bosom friends) and she is well acquainted with the town etiquette, we shall find her, no doubt, a useful and agreeable companion. She introduced us, the first night of our arrival to the play, where our party made a conspicuous figure; and through the connections of Miss Foster we received not a few fine compliments. But oh! my dear Huet, how insipid and dull are these things now to us!— I say us, because we all appear cemented in the same bonds of friendship and conjugal felicity.

To you, my friend, I speak, for I know your generous sentiments are congenial with my own; the things we are to see are novel, indeed, but we want no addition to our happiness, nor could  
any



any novelty or dissipation fill one vacuum, were we absent from each other. Each happy day brings its joys with it, and my adorable husband makes every moment subservient to my happiness: Oh, Selina! where, or how, or when, can thy grateful heart, in terms of pious fervor, sufficiently adore the Supreme Giver of all, for this his perfect gift of the best of Christians, husband and friend!

Excuse, my dear friend, the overflowing of my soul, since I cannot hide the inmost recess of my heart from you. I am indeed all joy and gratitude; nor do I think I shall become a convert to the pageantry of a playhouse, since I am not a constant frequenter of them. I hope in my next to give you a description of the Abbey Music-meeting, from which we expect great satisfaction, particularly as their Majesties and the princesses are to be present, whom we have never had the honour of seeing.

Accept

Accept our warmest wishes for your health, and hope your mamma and sisters enjoy that invaluable blessing; and believe us to be, with the most cordial esteem,

Ever your's,

SELINA WARTON.

LETTER

## LETTER XXI.

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MRS. WARTON

TO

MISS HUET.

*in Continuation.*

MY EVER DEAR FRIEND,

ACCORDING to promise in my last, I will attempt to give you a description of the Music at the Abbey, but my feeble powers are unable to do justice to what beggars all description. The doors were opened by nine o'clock, and by ten we seated ourselves commodiously in one of the side galleries; our situation was particularly agreeable to Miss Foster, who was thereby gratified with a full view of their Majesties' box, as also the entire command of the orchestra. It was fitted up  
in

in the most magnificent style, and is not in the chapel, as we in the country supposed, but in the body of the Abbey, surrounded by the monuments of our illustrious ancestors; the orchestra consisted of rows of seats one above another, at the top of which were placed a large pair of kettle drums, and just below these an organ of an amazing magnitude, but which had not, to me, the most pleasing appearance.

The Abbey was filled about eleven o'clock, and consisted of about three thousand persons of the first distinction. About a quarter before twelve their Majesties entered, and the whole band struck up in the most awful yet delightful manner, till their Majesties and their lovely daughters were seated.

When the grand and noble performance began, never did I before experience such sensations; it at once inspired the soul with heavenly rapture and extatic delight—to describe I cannot; the attempt would  
be



be vain: Indeed in my opinion, nothing short of what we are taught to believe of Heaven's high choir can equal it. I speak our general sentiments, for you know we are congenial souls. The gracious and benign looks of their Majesties were sufficient to interest and secure the affection of every beholder; they evinced how much they were interested in the enjoyment of their people's happiness in this solemn, grand, and awful entertainment. It was over about four o'clock, and no one seemed to depart disappointed; and how could they? For according to my ideas, it must have melted the savage heart, and dislodged the depraved disposition of its habitation, by what I call terror, though grand and tremendously solemn sounds; and then of a sudden they softer passions were all awakened and attuned to harmony—but I told you I would not attempt to describe, therefore beg pardon of my friend for the frailty of my pen.

Ranelagh will shortly open; and as we came here in search of pleasure, we are to make a party there, of which I will  
advise

advise you. Vauxhall is to be another evening's ramble; but I assure you, if what Mr. Warton has purchased for our future residence, be made in any degree like our dear Vale of Felicity, I care not how soon we get from these scenes of gaiety and dissipation.

The Abbey has been the place we have most admired, and the only one where we have not been teased with a set of troublesome beings, called beaux, who seem to make no difference between the married and single, modest, or immodest part of the creation; but are alike impertinent and insulting to all. - We spend our mornings rather more agreeable; we have been at a number of exhibitions by day-light such as wax-work, British Museum, Rackstrow's Museum, the astonishing ox, &c. &c. and, in short, to so many different places that I must defer an account of them till we meet, which I hope will not be long, as we have some notion of making you in our way to Warton-Grove; for so, with the consent of the  
best

best beloved of my heart, I intend to call it, when you may pass the verdict on it in *proprie personæ*. We then if you desire it, may leave you in passing to the happy village; or, if agreeable, on our return from it, as you know we are bound by the strictest honour to visit my Lord and Lady ———, and also to take from the school a girl to be my maid, as we all intend to do. We mean to solicit for the assembly fortune for those we have at present, as a marriage portion, they all seeming inclined to follow the example of their mistresses, which with us, you know is not disapproved, as his Lordship maintains, that the Divine Institution of Marriage is calculated to promote social and domestic happiness, and is beneficial both to Church and State; where the parties united are so from disinterested principles, and only meet in hope of making each other happy. Indeed our little community proves the position; in it is no such thing as a discontented or jealous couple; every one contributes as much as possible to the general tranquility, and the most trifling dispute, his Lordship hears with candour, and judges

judges with wisdom and moderation ; but my letter will be without bounds if I go on. Therefore I conclude this, expecting you to be ready to accompany us at an hour's notice, and beg you'll accept the hearty and sincere respects of

Your faithful,

SELINA WARTON.



## LETTER XXII.

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MRS. DEAN  
TO  
MR. SPICER.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

**Y**OUR candour will, I hope, plead my excuse, for not acquainting you sooner with our safe arrival in London; but, as my brother and Mr. Mitford have already, according to promise, sent my Lord a minute account of our late expedition, I believed any further particulars unnecessary.

Mr. Warton treats me with uncommon deference and respect; his demeanour and exterior behaviour is generous, liberal, and manly; and I account the happiness of having so dear and amiable  
a friend,

a friend, as my adored Maria, one of Heaven's greatest blessings.

His Lordship has made me an ample provision, above my most sanguine wishes; and, amidst a multitude of other kind offices, has ordered, from London, furniture for my house equal to his own; whilst he will not even suffer my grateful acknowledgments, disclaiming merit, amidst profuse liberality. Yet though my gratitude is prohibited, on pain of giving offence to this disinterested Nobleman, the Great Disposer of All will accept my unfeigned praise: Him I will ever solicit for the present and eternal happiness of my bounteous donor.

To particularize all the amiable qualities of his Lordship would be an arduous task, to specify the several instances of their beneficial influence, an impracticable one. His bounty is not confined to me alone, but roves at large and is exercised in an universal philanthropy. It is, however, an addition to my felicity that, while our No-

ble Patron continues to merit the esteem and good wishes of mankind, his lovely bride renders herself worthy his affection by a congeniality of disposition.

The pleasing sensations which occupy my mind I am, at this instant, unable to express in adequate terms; and, to add to them, I can only fondly hope that, from their example, the polite world will be stimulated to emulate their virtues, and imitate their benevolence. How much more exquisite, my dear friend, are the enjoyments of minds of such a cast, than those of the fordid, dissipated beings who live only to themselves! I know this exemplary pair will congratulate themselves on their not being found singular in the delightful exercise of charity, and sincerely rejoice that we are blessed with the means of promoting this Christian duty.

All friends here desire their most respectful compliments to him who has borne  
considerable

considerable a share in contributing to the  
happiness of them and

Your faithful friend,

MARIA DEAN.



## LETTER XXIII.

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*MRS. HERBERT*

TO

*MR. WARTON.*

HONOURED SIR,

**I** HAVE the satisfaction of informing you, your house is prepared for the reception of yourself and family.—I flatter myself the accommodations will ensure your approbation, by gratifying your expectations. I have endeavoured, by employing proper persons, to have elegance, taste, and convenience judiciously blended, suitable to the rank of yourself and retinue; if, however, any thing should be wanting, which I have studiously laboured to prevent, (I hope not in vain) your goodness

ness will impute it rather to an error of judgment than intentional blemish.

Having premised thus much relative to myself, may I take the liberty of expecting you soon at this mansion, accompanied by your accomplished spouse. Every person here is anxiously awaiting the happy event. The apartments destined for the reception of Lord C—— and his amiable Lady, are worthy only of such guests, who, like Omnipotence itself, diffuse cheerfulness and pleasure amongst all who are acquainted with them.

My love to my ever-dear Georgiana, Maria, and, in short, all the happy train that now attend you. I impatiently expect their daily arrival.

Pardon, dear Sir, this impertinent jargon, dictated by a maternal fondness, and a pleasure that can only be heightened by the endearing appellation of grandmother to some little prattlers, the fruits of your marriage,

marriage, which, I trust, will not be far distant.—Pray, Sir, be expeditious. and remove the anxiety of

Your dutiful and affectionate

E. HERBERT.

LETTER

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## LETTER XXIV.

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*MR. MITFORD*

TO

*LADY SAVOY.*

MADAM,

**A** GREEABLE to the commission with which I am invested, by the party to whom I have the honour to belong, I return you, in their name and for myself, our highest commendation and acknowledgments, for the polite condescension you evinced towards us, at your Ladyship's hospitable mansion, during the last three months, by the splendor and elegance of your entertainment, aided by your natural gaiety, attention, and unaffected affability. I am also desired, by Mr.



Warton, to entreat you immediately to honour his mansion with your presence; he is very importunate, and will not admit of an excuse; for he has proposed with Lord C——, to visit the Vale of Felicity, where, from the esteem which we entertain for you, your company will be particularly acceptable.

Our amusements have been various in the metropolis, our satisfaction universal; the musical selection from Handel, performed at Westminster-Abbey, gave us the most exquisite delight; the number of performers, with the harmony of the whole, added to the sacredness of the place, gave rise to ideas more delightful than the Commemoration of the immortal composer, making Heaven itself the object of our contemplation.—Your Ladyship has, doubtless, heard a more particular account of the merits of the different performers than the limits of this letter admit, and from more competent judges than I am; suffice it to say, however, that Volger's performance on the organ was most astonishing.

I am

I am afraid your patience is exhausted; so begging your Ladyship will signify your pleasure on receipt of this, respecting Mr. Warton's request, that we may, if necessary, inform you of the appointed day of meeting, shall now finish this tedious epistle.

I have the honour to be

Your Ladyship's

Most obedient servant,

R. MITFORD.

## LETTER XXV.

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*MISS MITFORD*

T O

*MISS FOSTER.*

DEAR FOSTER,

**W**E arrived at Mrs. Huet's, after we had reluctantly parted with you; but, as we could not detain you, must be contented.—Miss Huet is blessed with Selina's friendship, and, like yourself, renders herself worthy that honour, by her mental acquirements.

We were hospitably received by Mrs. and both the Miss Huets; the former expressed uncommon satisfaction on the meeting of three such amiable couples, and

and said she should have been glad to accompany us home, but this her infirmities rendered impossible.—Her daughters possess all the endearing qualities of their venerable parent in a superlative degree, the natural result of such a virtuous preceptor's assiduity.

My dear Selina and husband say they allow no excuse, provided you do not visit them at the appointed time, of which they engage to give you the earliest notice, especially as you were absent from the nuptial ceremony and attendant rejoicing.

I must earnestly entreat you will comply with our joint solicitations, to witness the rural felicity we enjoy, and acknowledge our recreations are, at least, equal to the follies and desires of the town; must beg, (for your friend's sake) you will not disappoint our expectations by neglect, and, if you can, send a card of invitation to Belville to meet you there. You will have no occasion to repent



pent such condescension, and confer, at the same time, the most pleasing favour on

Your affectionate friend,

MATILDA MITFORD.

P. S. Miss Huet goes home with us for a month.

LETTER

LETTER XXVI.

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*MR. WARTON*

T O

*MRS. HERBERT.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

**A**CCCEPT my thanks for the trouble you have sustained on my account during my absence.——We have left London, and expect to be with you in a week or ten days at most, therefore wish you would acquaint Mr. Dean's people, that so they may have every thing ready on my arrival, for the reception of their master, mistress, and some company; likewise to provide accommodation for all the servants, amongst my

my tenants nearest the house, as we shall not find room enough; you will see what spare rooms and what conveniencies they have, and with a liberal hand, order what you find wanting.

Inclosed I send you my wishes for what I would have to celebrate our nuptials, and depend on you to see it accomplished. I have met with a deserving young Clergyman, whom I have engaged for my Chaplain, and having communicated my intentions to him, and no one else, I recommend him to you as an assistant in this business, which I know is by far too fatiguing for you. I have fully informed Mr. Williams of every particular, and make no doubt but you will exert your endeavours to improve it: I could wish on this occasion to lay aside all parsimony, and entertain not only my friends and tenants, but all around me, who can partake with pleasure another's happiness; for heaven has blessed me abundantly, and my wish and desire is  
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love

to distribute to others, as far as in my power. I remain, my dear Herbert, with love and friendship,

Yours

T. WARTON.

LETTER



## LETTER XXVII.

---

*MISS MITFORD*

TO

*MISS FOSTER.*

MY DEAR FOSTER,

I HOPE you will congratulate me on receiving a few lines from my dear Captain, in answer to my brother, to whom Mr. Warton wishes he had sent an invitation to meet us at his house, [on our first arrival to celebrate the nuptials of your friends; some will say has it not been done already? but all that is past, and we are to have another jubilee at his own mansion. Lord and Lady C——, bore the greatest share of the expence before, but in this generous Warton will have

have no partner : his invitation is general to every one whom we take notice of.

I shall let you know of the Captain's coming for two or three reasons: The first for joy, as it came unexpectedly; the second for your sake, having sent him word to call and bring you with him; and the third, because I long to see him introduced to such noble amiable friends, which now are so nearly connected with us.

On Saturday evening next we expect all to assemble, for on Sunday we are to appear at the Parish Church in public. A sight, I dare believe, has not before been seen like it, at any town or village; the fair young village couples are not exempt—but I anticipate too much, perhaps, therefore shall say no more, but that

I am for ever,

Your's

M. MITFORD.

LETTER

LETTER XXVIII.

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*MRS. MITFORD,*

T O

*MRS. AUSTIN.*

DEAR SISTER,

**M**Y brother informed you of the change which was about to take place at the time of his writing to you; a change so sudden, so unexpected, must have given your susceptible heart many emotions for our future happiness, which we well know is dear to you; but the task I am engaged in by my brother and Maria, is not so arduous as may be imagined, since each of our partners are incomparable.

You have often heard my brother dwell with rapture on the virtues of his friend ;  
that

that valuable friend is now my adorable husband, bound by friendship's sacred tie as well as love, for we were on both sides taught to love each other.

Selina, my brother's bride, lovely as she is, possesses all those qualities which will endear her to your friendship; and the husband of Maria is amiable, modest, pious, and worthy, and whose constant aim is to render herself an inestimable friend to all, desires to have the education of your's and our children.

We hope your dear Mr. ———, and self will quickly bring them, to become personally acquainted with their new relations. Enclosed I have sent you a journal of each day's happiness.

Mrs. Herbert begs to be remembered to you and your's, likewise to your happy sister, and in the name of all I subscribe myself

Your's,

GEORGIANA MITFORD.

LETTER



## LETTER XXIX.

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*MRS. DEAN*

TO

*MRS. AUSTIN.*

DEAREST SISTER,

**I** FEAR you will hardly excuse my inattention in so seldom writing, but am certain, when you are properly acquainted with every circumstance, and personally known to those with whom we are strongly connected, since our arrival in England, I have no doubt but your free and unlimited pardon will be given to all.

My brother acquainted you with our intentions, previous to their taking place. My sister has sent you an account of what happened

happened in consequence; and I have taken the pleasing task of continuing our history. On Saturday, after the date of the letter you received, our guests arrived at Mr. Warton's, with an intent, according to the English phrase, of house-warming. Mr. Dean and myself took possession of ours; the establishment of which by the generosity of my brother has far exceeded our most sanguine expectations, and filled our grateful hearts with the utmost esteem and love for him—but to proceed.

We arrived two days previous to our dear brother, and his lovely spouse, to prepare for the reception of many friends, who were invited to partake of this splendid entertainment: The Parish bells ushered into the village all the noble guests, and by the evening every house was filled with visitants. The good Lord and Lady O——, accompanied our brother and sister.

The Duke of O——, honoured us at the assembly, and the most respectable per-

personages, in the neighbourhood were in his train, by appointment, who all seemed eager to partake of the Jubilee. The four amiable village couples were likewise of our party ; but what exceeded all joy was another lovely and blooming couple, who, by the very artful contrivance of Warton and Mitford, and with the privity of Dean, were led to the altar of Hymen, bound in its silken bonds ; in appearance, a lovelier couple were never united, they were Captain Williams and Miss Mitford, the eldest and beautiful sister of Mr. Mitford, and our dear Selina. The trick was thus.—The Captain had long paid his addresses to Miss Mitford, by whom he was equally beloved : He had often pressed her consent to their union, but such was her situation with her brother and sister in our happy vale, that she would not consent to his wishes, unless he made his abode among them ; but he having a company in a marching regiment which was ordered on a distant station, he could not, consistent with the principle of a man of honour agree to her request till his regiment had performed their

their duty and returned to England, which happened to be the case at this happy juncture.

My dear brother had fully learned these particulars from Mr. Mitford, who loves the Captain with fraternal affection—his amiable qualities more so, as seldom to be found in a soldier.—Those two valuable men, wishing Matilda and every one as happy as themselves, obtained the Captain a commission in the guards, as less likely to go abroad, and sent him word of the change. They then pretended to have wrought upon Matilda in his favor, without acquainting her with the object of their endeavours; at the same time requested, as he came through the metropolis, he would bring a license with him. This scheme pleasing the gentlemen, they contrived their spouses, who were acquainted with the plot, should be present at the interview—the first meeting of this lovely pair was accomplished by artifice; they told her he was coming by invitation, and procured a letter to him from her desiring him to bring Miss



Foster with him from London; their arrival was interrupted; and Miss Foster being admitted into the scheme, Matilda was led to the concealed spot, where all the traitors and abettors were hid, except Selina, who remained with her till the Captain was announced, and ushered into her presence. After the mutual embrace of the two sisters, Selina retired to her place of concealment, when a scene ensued I am unable to describe. The moment they were alone, the Captain fell on his knee, and seizing her hand with rapture, exclaimed, "Oh! Matilda, dearest of women, how happy hast thou, by this condescension made thy unworthy slave? How can I sufficiently pour forth my gratitude to you, or those friends, who have interested themselves in my behalf: Nothing but gratitude and love shall ever inhabit the late torment-ed breast of thy adored Edward"—tell me, exclaimed he, kissing her hand ten thousand times, if possible, in a moment, "when will the happy day arrive on which I can call thee mine."

Matilda,

Matilda, amazed at what she had just heard, endeavoured to withdraw her hand from that of the Captain, and asked what she was to understand by his last words? "You know, Sir," continued she, "my determination; and I'll hear no more till Providence has altered your station. You have long known my affection, which it has not been in my power to conceal, and I sincerely rejoice to see you; still however I am under the necessity of desiring you to quit me, or never more mention what you have just repeated."

"Cruel Matilda!" cried the noble youth bursting into tears, "Cruel beauty! why were my fond hopes deluded with so flattering a prospect: I go then for ever from the brink of happiness, plunged still deeper into despair—— Why suffer me to fall the victim of delusion, or insult my feelings by raising me to the utmost summit of my wishes, then crushing my hopes on the verge of consummation, only to render me still more unhappy?—permit me a last embrace, and I'll fly for ever."

Matilda, and the whole company were evidently affected ; the gentlemen began to repent their frolic, but none had power to stir.—Matilda sobbed, and urging him not to go, said, “ I have not deluded you ; I have not insulted you ; God forbid ! all my earthly happiness is centered in you, why will you fly ? The all protecting hand of Providence, will, I am persuaded, give us an opportunity of being yet happy, but why should we be thus impatient ? God in his own time, who sees our constancy, will reward our affection.”

“ Oh ! life giving word,” replied the Captain, “ You again revive my hopes, but was your love as ardent as mine you would not reject the solicitation of your dearest friends, nor withstand the fond intreaties of your most faithful and fervent lover. You see Selina happy with a Warton, your brother with a Georgiana, a Dean with a Maria ; their earnest and mutual wishes are to see Matilda so with her Edward ; and

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“that Matilda is insensible of her own  
“happiness.”

“No Sir,” replied she, “you mistake;  
“it is not so, they are all happy, and  
“next to my own, I rejoice in theirs;  
“they esteem you, but not one has  
“mentioned the subject as you represent  
“it.”

“Infatuated maid,” said the Captain,  
“look on this letter, which brought me  
“to you, satisfy yourself of their wishes;”  
Matilda read the letter, but still assured  
the Captain it was a forgery to render  
them both unhappy: “Pity me,” said  
she, “and pardon my behaviour to you;  
“had I known of this, I should have been  
“prepared to have answered and con-  
“vinced you of its falsity; but my bro-  
“ther shall see it, and we will endeavour  
“to trace the author.”

The Captain remained silent for a mo-  
ment, but at length clasping her in his  
arms, exclaimed, “Now can you con-  
“sider me in fault? do you not think



“ it a disappointment sufficient to render  
“ me miserable ! Sure a heart of adamant  
“ cannot inhabit that divine form to ren-  
“ der it callous to the soft incitements of  
“ love and friendship.—“ No Matilda;”  
continued the Captain, “ ’tis impossible !  
“ and we must not part thus.”—Mitford  
entered from behind the arras—“ No,  
“ nor shall not, by Heaven, till you call  
“ me brother !”

Matilda shrieked, and fainted in the  
arms of her lover—every assistance was  
immediately administered to recover the  
gentle fair, who at length opened her fine  
eyes, to the unspeakable joy of her af-  
frighted lover ; this frolic, which had  
nearly proved fatal to the lovers, was sin-  
cerely repented of by all parties.

Mr. Warton pathetically related the  
scene which by his imprudence he had  
occasioned ; but hoped both parties would  
pardon him, since his intentions were to  
make them happy ; so saying, he put the  
commission into Matilda’s hand, and ad-  
ded, “ see if that obdurate fair can alter  
“ her

"her sentiments—if you cannot, you  
"love not, since love and friendship can  
"do no more."

Matilda would fain have knelt to our  
brother, but he would accept no thanks,  
only intreated pardon for wantonly sport-  
ing with their peace.

The Captain's noble heart was melted  
with gratitude, which suffused his eyes  
and disenabled him from uttering a word  
—he was asked: "Are you now ready  
"to receive this lady as a bride! And  
"are you ready, Madam, to make the  
"best of men happy." The Captain was  
all extasy, the Lady covered with blush-  
es: he clasped her in his arms, while  
every tongue rung the persuasive peal,  
till he extorted a faint yes; he no sooner  
announced this pleasing affirmative, than  
Mr. Mitford desired my beloved to put it  
out of her power to recede, which she  
resisted, and was forced a willing victim  
to the altar; her two bride-maids being  
in waiting, my Lord and Lady C——  
were called in, and his Lordship insisting

on the same honor he had before among us, gave her to her enraptured Captain.

A Miss Foster and a Miss Huet were the bride-maids ; and so in the space of an hour, Matilda, from whose thoughts marriage was as yet far distant, became a bride to the only man, who had ever made an impression on one of the most perfect and lovely women in the creation, who had long sighed for the object of her affections, ere she would yield consent to be his, urging prudential motives, and that her affection would never, after marriage, permit her to separate from her husband, and the attachment of her beloved brother : the delightful village also invited her to reside where happiness crowned its benevolent inhabitants.

After the ceremony, which was performed in my brother's Chapel, she collected her spirits sufficient to beg it might be kept secret from the rest of the company ; and the usual ceremony in such cases being complied with, we separated as if nothing had happened.

Our

Our guests coming in from rambling in different parties soon after, and the usual salutation over, an elegant cold collation was served up, and each were shewn their respective chambers. By the desire of the lovely couple, they retired with us, as did Miss Foster and Huet, with several others who chose to be more retired than they possibly could be should they mix in the general bustle; and the marriage was kept a profound secret from all but those who were witnesses of the strenuous endeavours of Mr. Warton to render his sister happy.

On Sunday morning was private breakfasting, some in parties in the garden, others in the saloon, but all repaired to the Church, for so the invitation ran, and the Captain led his bride there in silent triumph. An excellent sermon was preached by the Honourable and Rev. Dr. C ———, in favour of conjugal love and domestic felicity, compared with the degeneracy of the age, which seemed to have a most happy effect on a numerous audience.



Dinner was served up in different apartments, exclusive of that in the grand saloon, to which one hundred persons seated themselves. Every thing was conducted in the greatest order, and the company seemed particularly charmed with the delightful park and woods adjoining.—All retired early to rest, as with one consent, both from respect to the day, and to be prepared for early rising to begin the Jubilee.

The morn was ushered in by the rising sun, bells ringing, and the shepherds neatly and uniformly dressed, tuning their pipes, and serenading the house and park with a variety of rural entertainments, which from the extreme length of this letter I must pass over.

Mr. Warton and Mitford were up to congratulate the company, and conduct them to their appointed places for breakfast, in a beautiful and extensive garden adjoining to the house; where art and nature seemed combined to spread luxurious delight; here about twenty boys  
and

and as many girls were habited in a rural style, and decorated with artificial and real flowers, spreading the walks, as they entered in four divisions to four tables. At one, Lord C——— and Georgiana presided; another, Warton and Lady C———; a third, Mitford and Selina; the fourth, the Captain and his wife. The Company were equally divided, and grand pavillions shielded them from the weather. At each table five girls and five boys attended, and excited the general admiration of the company. Behind the different pavillions, a band of music delighted the ears, while conversation rational and entertaining rendered the repast highly agreeable.

When breakfast was ended the company walked into the park, which the villagers had occupied, and were preparing many rural sports; amongst others the noble game of cricket, at which two sets of the young and handsome were selected, who strove for three prizes. The first a plough, the other two of less value. This afforded great entertainment and

lasted some hours; during which a cold collation was served, with wine, &c. for the common use.

After a sharp contest for the prizes was decided, another set appeared, with bows and arrows, in manner of the old English archery, in which, great skill and dexterity were displayed; the prizes were three sheep to the best marksman, two sheep to the second, and one to the third. The archers were neatly and uniformly clad, and their activity afforded great entertainment to the spectators.

These amusements being ended, the country people were summoned to dinner, at which about one hundred men, women and children, were assembled, the dinner consisted of old English roast beef, and plumb pudding; there was boiled beef, besides, and several sheep dressed with vegetables of all kinds; and great order and decorum was observed; this plentiful provision was made in order that the rustics might partake of a supper.

Dinner

Dinner being ended, the guests retired to the house, to imitate the villagers, and every thing in season, both useful and ornamental appeared at the table; a most elegant desert crowned the festive and hospitable board. The Ladies and Gentlemen differed from modern companies, the former deemed it no indecency to remain while the gentlemen indulged the bottle. A spacious room was thrown open exhibiting an amazing number of instruments, and we had a number of voices, which seemed to unite every individual as one harmonious soul.

Nothing, my dear sister, could equal the seraphic bliss with which all seemed enraptured; and I am much mistaken, if it does not produce tender scenes between some of the parties present.—The Duke of —— seemed particularly attentive to a Miss L——, who adds to great skill in music and harmony of voice, an elegant figure and amiable disposition.

Lord Townly, who before had paid great attention to Miss Mitford, finding  
her



her Captain with her, like a man of honour, has withdrawn his forces of love, and besieged with its whole artillery her friend, Miss Foster, who, abating a little for coquetry, is, indeed, a lovely girl.

Several other young couples seemed well pleased with each other, and particularly attracted by the beauty of the scene, which was well adapted to inspire tender passion. Those who enjoyed the sweets of this terrestrial Paradise, were in no haste to bring it to a conclusion, as they did not break up till a very late hour.

The villagers also shared its pleasures, for the concert being in the lower part of the house, and the doors and windows thrown open, these worthy people partook of the festivity. It was concluded by the rustics who began it, with a ball on the green, in which several of the young Noblemen cordially joined. This over, supper was announced, and served with no less decorum and elegance than dinner the preceding day.

I fear

I fear my dear sister will think this a tedious letter ; shall, therefore, defer till my next an account of the splendor and conviviality of as noble and worthy an assemblage of beauty and dignity as ever, perhaps, graced the mansion of a private gentleman.

Pray present our most cordial affection to your beloved spouse and children, and believe me to be with the highest sentiments of esteem,

Your's,

M. DEAN.

LETTER

## LETTER XXX.

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MRS. DEAN

TO

MRS. AUSTIN,

*in continuation.*

ACCORDING to my promise in my last, I have taken up my pen, to inform my dear sister of our matrimonial Jubilee; though it has placed my brother in an amiable light to all around him, it has not increased our happiness, since that can receive no addition this world can afford. Heaven grant this felicity may continue; though it will make life, perhaps, too desirable. Yet, according to the disposition of our amiable Patrons, there

there seems little doubts of its durability.

I finished my last with an account of Monday's festival, and must now present you with Tuesday's, which was of a most elegant nature. About a mile from the house, at the extremity of the Park runs the Thames, on which there was what in the metropolis would be called a Regatta. The breakfast was much in the same stile as Monday's; but many, from the fatigue of the over night, chose their own apartments.

A most magnificent dinner was provided, on board a number of pleasure-barges, or yatchs, elegantly decorated, each having a band of music; the company divided themselves by lot, and the same persons presided as at the tables on shore. The day was beautiful beyond description, and a grand salute of cannon was discharged when the company all got on board. They had an agreeable sail of several hours, till dinner was served, when they returned near the park, where



where seven small boats appeared, with each a young waterman on board, destined to row against tide, for three prizes of twenty, ten and five guineas; and the boat of each rower successful or not, was to be his own; they were dressed in a very light, but pleasing manner, and well deserved the reward they contended for; and as the weather proved so favourable, it was a most delightful scene. The spectators on shore were numerous; and after the usual refreshments, the company landed under a discharge of cannon.

In the dresses for the ball, there was an emulation of magnificence which would have done honour to a Court.—As soon as all the company were assembled in the ball room, Lord C—— desired the favour of speaking, a few words to introduce a daughter. Poor Matilda blushed—but my Lord, taking hold of her by the hand, said, “ Though I promised secrecy at the  
“ ceremony, I do not, my dear, think it will  
“ be to your honour to keep it so, and to  
“ let this noble company part, without  
“ sharing your felicity, which I am well  
“ aware

“ aware they all do : I shall deliver my  
“ daughter to your protection, and  
“ both of you to the friendship of all  
“ present.

“ Ladies and Gentlemen,” continued his Lordship, “ this Lady was absolutely  
“ bent against marriage, though she did not  
“ deny her attachment for this gallant Cap-  
“ tain ; but on the first meeting on Saturday  
“ helped by a scheme of her worthy bro-  
“ ther’s, and extorting a promise of amend-  
“ ment from her, we insisted on the immedi-  
“ ate celebration of an event so desirable to  
“ the whole family, which with a promise of  
“ secrecy, was happily and instantly conclu-  
“ ded, and I am proud in having the honour  
“ of calling her daughter.” He then with  
a gallantry peculiarly pleasing, saluted the  
bride, who was covered with confusion ;  
his example was followed by all the gen-  
tlemen present, and the room rang with  
the congratulations of all present, for their  
lasting happiness, every one declaring  
the most cordial friendship for the happy  
pair.

I confess

I confess this ceremony was almost too much for any lady to bear ; but not being previously apprized of it, her spirits were not depressed till the moment their exertion were called into action. The tumult of joy having subsided, my Lord said he must do himself the same honour he had before with his own children, and took Matilda out for the first minuet, which those two accomplished persons went through with inimitable grace, to the admiration of every one present. The Duke of —— selected the partner I mentioned before, and a lovely couple they certainly are. Lord Townly and Miss Foster (I beg her pardon for my unjust suspicion of her). Suffice it to say, a more agreeable couple never met.—You will excuse me I hope for adding no more of the dancing. We had all partners to our satisfaction ; and though no improper assignations took place, yet there were several nymphs and swains, who I dare say will often meet again.

The domestic happiness which prevails amongst us seems to inspire the gay young men

men with true ideas of the felicity of a conjugal life, when the objects are possessed of congenial souls, as we are ; there we have reason to hope we shall be the humble instruments of promoting the happiness of many.

The Captain expressed his joy at his nuptials being made public, and declares himself the happiest of men. Our noble company kept up the ball with great spirit, and next day was mentioned as a time of separation, but the lovers of harmony entreated another concert before we part, which meets the approbation of all parties, who fear nothing but intruding too much ; nor could any other reason ever make them wish to leave so hospitable and delightful a place.

The beginning of Wednesday was spent in various rambling parties. After dinner on the plain before the house the concert commenced ; every one bore a part, which far exceeded the utmost stretch of imagination. It was indeed divine, and it was with difficulty  
we



we could prevail on ourselves to give up the pleasing task ; but we had one more pleasure to partake of, though it was only a feast for the eyes. We attended a magnificent and superb fire-work, conducted by the same hands who furnish Ranelagh with that species of amusement ; but nothing came near the delightful scene we had before left, which with one universal consent, we agreed to dedicate two hours more to, after breakfast.

I would have mentioned a few names as supremely great ; but the whole was so compleat a band, that it would be injustice to comment on any individual ; and the refined amateurs of the art must have acknowledged its excellence.

Immediately after this was over, our guests began to take their leave. This was a scene of real tenderness between the visitors and the visited ; and it was mutually agreed to keep up the anniversary of the season at one or other of their country seats, and every one  
signed

signed a paper, presented by the Duke of —, as a member of the happy and harmonious society. Sensibility was keenly awakened at the parting, so mutually charmed had the company been with each other. The greater part were driven away by the approach of evening; but a small and agreeable party were prevailed on to give us their company a few days longer. Lord C—— and his amiable consort remained, as did Lord Townly by his own invitation, who is a professed admirer of Miss Foster: He is an accomplished man, of course agreeable to us, and I believe no less so to her. She is so full of vivacity sometimes, as to overpower him, which she does by way of trying the strength of his affection.

The Captain and his Lady stays a fortnight with us, and then he goes to London for a short time, but does not intend to take a house in town, rather choosing to divide his time of absence from the regiment betwixt us and Mr. Mitford. My brother has accommodated

ted him with a suite of apartments in his house, and Mr. Mitford, has done the same.

My Lord C—— and his Lady, Mr. Mitford and Georgiana, and four village couples, leave us in about three or four days. And now, my dear sister, I have given you the best account in my power of the whole ; which may, perhaps, have tired your patience as unprofitable reading ; therefore conclude with wishing you and yours uninterrupted health and happiness.

Dear sister,

Your's affectionately,

MARIA DEAN.

LETTER

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## LETTER XXXI.

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DUKE OF ———

TO

*SIR HARRY EVELYN.*

DEAR SIR HARRY,

I AM just now arrived from Paradise, a perfect Paradise, I assure you; but how I am, I know not; I want a friend's help and advice in the most serious business of my life. I think I am in love; but whether it is with a woman, or flowing from general ideas of matrimony, I cannot say. The place I have left is certainly a matrimonial Heaven, infusing life and extatic bliss in its favourite votaries.

Oh, that you had been but a witness to

VOL. I.

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those



those scenes of delight I have just quitted with regret.

You probably have heard of Lord C——, and a village called the Vale of Felicity. I was there about four months ago, at the celebration of the nuptials of seven amiable couples, and have now been at Worton seat, at a Jubilee given by him, at which all the lovely pairs assisted, and also an eighth marriage took place on the evening the company assembled, but in a private manner, to humour the bride, who is an angel—Captain Williams the happy possessor. Indeed, more beauty and perfection never met, than in the ladies I have mentioned—vainly did I lament one of them was not destined for me; but I am sensible I have not deserved the distinction; and I much fear I shall never meet with one who can confer on me that bliss I have witnessed in those regions of happiness. If there is another divinity on earth, it must be in that circle; for, indeed, it seems to have diffused its influence, and I have not escaped the force of its power.—I have seen—  
and,

and, I believe, love a Miss L——; her person is charming; her mind seems enlightened; she sings divinely, dances gracefully, and plays delightfully.—In my libertine moments I have adored her; but now I look for happiness of a more substantial nature; I want a wife, an exact copy of what I have seen; one capable to charm me, and in whose tender disposition and affection I might repose with security.—Whether the one I have mentioned would be this to me, I should like to know.—If in the affirmative, I should be the happiest of mortals.—I find I love her with an affection that disturbs my peace.—Assist me, my dear friend, in this dilemma, and do not ridicule the serious conversion of your once gay friend. You know not the difference, perhaps, of modest virtue and unadorned beauty from an assemblage of poor painted ——'s. Oh, horrid name!—too bad to mention; and I am sorry to say, you and I have sacrificed many a precious hour at the shrine of voluptuousness, and that without any real satisfaction; in short, nothing but loss

of honour, peace, rest, and constitution. Once more I entreat your advice in this arduous task—tell me how I am to try the temper of my angelic mistress. I shall rely on your friendship, and request your immediate answer, remaining, in the mean time, with the highest sentiments of esteem.

Your's,

G. H.

LETTER

## LETTER XXXII.

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*MISS HUET*

TO

*MRS. WARTON.*

DEAREST FRIEND,

ACCORDING to your request, this serves to acquaint you, that I got safe home, but not without a convoy: Captain Wilson met my chaise immediately on my quitting your house: he was on horseback, attended by a couple of servants, and insisted on seeing me safe home. I fancy it was a contrivance of Warton's; but I must pardon him, as my 'Squire behaved with the most respectful and distant attention, riding close by the door for several miles, till a violent



storm gathering, good manners induced me to ask him to shelter himself, which he did with apparent thankfulness; and our discourse turning on the subject of those friends we had just left, he, in the most modest, but affecting manner declared a passion of the sincerest kind for me, wishing it had been his lot to be among the chosen few, who seemed born to bless mankind, and to become patterns of conjugal affection to the world.—“And why,” my dear Miss Huet,” said he, “may not you and I contribute to this great end?—I have seen so much true joy and felicity in those happy mansions, that I from this moment declare myself a votary of virtuous love, and an enemy to vice in whatever form it may appear.”—He pressed my hand with rapture—I was perfectly dumb, and looked so silly as to be ashamed of myself. He urged an answer. I thanked him in the best manner I was able, and applauded his resolution; but told him I could say no further without consulting my mamma. To this he expressed his acquiescence, and begged

begged permission to wait on me home. He asked if my heart was disengaged. I ingenuously answered it was, though I did not say truth, for I found it too much inclined towards him; however, after an agreeable journey, we reached home, and he engagingly led me to my mamma; who received me with joy, and him very politely; at the same time thanked him and Mr. Warton for seeing me safe; and upon my telling her he was many miles from home, she entreated him to take a bed, which he readily accepted. After he retired, my mother made many enquiries, and, without hesitation, I told her the whole that had passed. She seemed highly pleased with my candour, and received him at breakfast with the greatest cordiality and frankness. Of this he took the advantage, and preferred his suit, which he urged so powerfully, as to gain her consent to pay his addresses in form. She is, thank the Gracious Power, as well as we can expect her to be. She has often declared the chief object of her wishes was to see me and my sister

G 3

happily

happily settled. Captain Wilson is now with us, having accepted an invitation to pass a few days here. Adieu, my dear friend, and forget me not to your beloved.

Your's sincerely,

K. HUET.

LETTER

## LETTER XXXIII.

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*MRS. MITFORD,*

TO

*MRS. WARTON.*

DEAREST SISTER,

**A**FTER a pleasant journey, in which we had nothing to regret, but the separation which has taken place among us, we arrived in our dear village, and were received with great joy by all its inhabitants, who expressed a satisfaction little short of adoration at the sight of their noble and generous patrons and benefactors. What heart-felt sensations of joy must those exalted Personages feel, in being able to render so many industrious people happy; and not only those, but others are likely to share the blessings they

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have



have diffused. Blessings I must call them; for did my Selina know what I now feel, and what I have hitherto felt, on account of the industrious poor, among whom I have sojourned till this period of life, I should deeply awaken her sensibility, in a degree the extreme opposite to that joy I taste in my present incomparable state of happiness. I allude to those unhappy people of a distant region, who, merely because they differ from us in colour, are doomed to groan beneath the yoke of perpetual slavery. Can the tincture of the skin justify so cruel an exercise of authority?—Or, are the heavenly portals shut to all who are not of our own complexion?—Humanity shudders at the idea, and Religion forbids such a supposition.—But the feelings of the one, and the principles of the other, are sacrificed to a mercantile thirst for gain.

My brother, from his humane temper, was an excellent master; and often has it affected him to have under him as vassals, Chiefs, and even Princes, whom he has purchased like beasts, and almost to perform

perform the same duties.—Many has he restored to liberty, and all he endeavoured to make comfortable under his care. But even this could not satisfy a heart capable of feeling for another's woes. Often has he lamented his situation, and wished himself a labourer in his native country, the benignity of whose laws afford equal protection to the ermined Lord and the humble peasant.

The thought, however, of being able some time to do good, encouraged him to continue in the island, till he found one in whose integrity he could confide for the security of his property. In the young man who married our sister, he accomplished his wishes, and brought us to this land of freedom and unlooked for happiness.

With this I send Sally Snowden, who I hope you will find worthy your choice; Nanny Needful for Maria, and Betsy Harris for myself. Mr. Mitford takes for his assistants, Thomas Appleby and his wife; they are to have an apartment with

us, and seem a happy couple, but I hope they are all so. Mr. Mitford would wish Mr. Warton to take William Conyers as a kind of bailiff, he being a tolerable scholar; by so doing, he thinks it will enable them to lay by for old age the little they gained by their marriage. Indeed, we ought to look upon them as brother and sister, since one and the same occasion rendered us what we are. My love to my brother, Mrs. Herbert, Maria, and Mr. Dean, and am dear Selina ever

Your's,

GEORGIANA WARTON.

LETTER

## LETTER XXXIV.

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*SIR HENRY EVELYN*

T O

*THE DUKE OF —.*

**I**N conformity to your request, I now give you my advice as brief as possible; and am sorry you should even hint at my ridiculing your present turn of mind: It is commendable and praise worthy; and were I even the most thoughtless libertine, I should always, thank Heaven, revere virtue wherever I found it. I am more than charmed with your friends, and would have thought myself infinitely happy to have been of the party. Your account, indeed, was only superficial; but I have seen Townly, who



who has given me verbally a particular account of every circumstance; and I can assure you he is in the same predicament with yourself, only he has not the same doubts respecting his future happiness; he seems confident of it, and I wish him success. My advice to you, my dear friend is, to sound the lady's mind, and see that her attachment be not of an interested nature, then try her principles, and if you are therefrom satisfied of her having had a religious and virtuous education, you need no longer hesitate in making your proposals, candidly telling her what you expect in the married state. If your courage be insufficient for this, transmit your thoughts by letter: this way you will find to save much trouble, and obtain a more ready and explicit answer. I do not wish you to have a prude for your wife—No, I only advise you to take care and have one whose morals have not been too much debased by a familiar intercourse with the fashionable world. You will best learn this from the past conduct of the Lady's parents. This is the only advice I can offer, and I wish  
you

you speedily to adopt it.—A Miss Foster is Townly's hope. I wish you both a happy celebration, and shall be proud of being present, and having the happiness of giving you a bride equal to your wishes.

Further I request, that the celebration may be at your own seat, and that your tenants share your bounty. But I write as if all your expectations were answered—of this, however, I have but little doubt they will be; and beg leave to subscribe myself,

Your's sincerely,

HENRY EVELYN.

LETTER

## LETTER XXXV.

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*MR. WARTON*

TO

*MR. MITFORD.*

DEAR FRIEND,

**A** CCEPT my sincere thanks for the most compleat happiness mortal ever enjoyed in possession of the most amiable of sisters. Accept my thanks also for contributing to the happiness of my beloved sister in an eminent degree as she herself expresses it. Mr. Dean, that worthy man, must also be remembered by me with gratitude, for the affection he bears my dear Maria. Believe me, my happiness would have been incomplete, if my sisters' had not been perfectly so. I rejoice with Selina and you in the happy union of  
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the Captain and Matilda; though, I confess I rather repented our experiment. They are a pair rich in every virtue, and may nothing but remote old age ever dissolve their union. I thank you for your care of my domestic concerns, and with pleasure accept the person you recommend for my bailiff. I thought of doing the business myself; but the confinement would deprive me of the opportunity of enquiring after those victims of penury and want, whose necessities humanity instructs me to relieve. The Almighty Dispenser of all good things did not give me the talent I possess to hide it in the earth, and we only fulfil the purpose of our creation in mutually assisting each other.

I now request the correspondence I expected to commence on my first arrival, respecting our mutual history. That was, however, prevented by a combination of circumstances, which makes me less regret the suspension.—Every impediment being now removed, let us fairly and openly enter on the business, and be altogether



altogether domesticated. I claim the prior engagement; and, for myself, I shall most unreservedly unfold every particular of my progress through life, which has been marked in the beginning with good fortune, and crowned in the end with supreme happiness. In your life I do not expect a recapitulation of great exploits or adventures, but I long for an account of that godlike man, Lord C—, as it would be my greatest ambition to copy after so perfect a model.

Your's ever,

T. WARTON.

LETTER

LETTER XXXVI.

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MR. MITFORD

TO

MR. WARTON.

ESTEEMED FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your's, and so far as my small adventures run, chearfully comply with your requisition. You may remember I was sent for from school to attend my father's funeral, who died of an epidemic distemper; and from the attention of my mother during his illness, together with the effect his death had on her more than common tenderuefs, she survived him but a few days, leaving three orphan children unprotected; myself only  
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about sixteen, Matilda eight, and Selina six years of age. I was a young guardian indeed you will say, but though so young, I found a secret something whisper me to protect these infants. From that moment I considered myself as their only parent. What my father left us was trifling, compared with the stile in which we lived; we had a servant who lived with my mother from her infancy, and, with the consent of Mr. Wiseman, who was left an Executor, I retained her with us. Our whole portion left by my father was about two thousand pounds; but the salary he enjoyed from his post enabled him to live very genteel. As I had received a clasical education, I was urged by my friends to fix on some profession. Sometimes I was for the Church, sometimes for the bar, ever varying in my mind, as my wishes were not to leave my sisters, as in either case I must have done, had I chose one of those.

During this interval of thinking Mr. Spicer, an intimate friend of my father's, happening to call, the discourse turned on  
my

my future prospects; I candidly informed him my reasons for not chusing any profession. He commended me in the warmest terms; and kindly informed me my Lord C——'s stewardship was vacant; in which with frugality I might insure a comfortable living for my little family; at the same time observed my youth and inexperience; but notwithstanding, assured me, if I approved it, my Lord would have no scruples, since his only wish was to do good. I had scarce presence of mind to thank him for so unexpected a mark of friendship, but with some hesitation told him it would be the height of my ambition to devote my future life to his service. He left me, promising to exert himself in my behalf, and said, he had no doubt but if his Lordship had known the circumstances he would himself have proposed it; this you may be sure was a balsam for my spirits; for young as I was, the loss of my parents had given me a steadiness uncommon for my years. I was not long in suspense; Mr. Spicer wrote for me to attend my Lord two days after he



he left me. I immediately set off with joy; but a timid modesty kept me within bounds. I waited on my friend, who immediately introduced me to his Lordship and his amiable Lady; they received me with the greatest affability, which removed the fears that had before depressed me; they condoled me on the loss of my parents; enquired minutely into my circumstances; of all which I informed them truly.

My Lord then spoke of his Stewardship; told me, if I approved of it, he would make me comfortable; and if I looked upon him and his Lady as parents, they would make themselves such to me and sisters. Oh, my friend, what benignity shone forth in the countenances of these exalted Personages; my grateful heart repressed the utterance of my tongue, and I vainly essayed to return my due acknowledgments. I bent on my knee, but they desired me to rise, saying that was a humiliation only due to the Deity, and could by no means be admitted by them.

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them. My silence they construed into the most effectual thanks I could give, for doing what they only looked upon as their duty, and begged of me to retire with Mr. Spicer till dinner, when he would inform me what they should require of me. I bowed and retired, and was glad of the opportunity to find vent for my tears, which my friend permitted for some moments.

When I began to collect myself, and consider the immense obligation, I begged him to inform me of my duty, as I now longed for nothing so much as to approve myself worthy the confidence those noble Personages had been pleased to honour me with. He left me about a quarter of an hour; when returning, he took me to the apartments allotted for my use, which was a genteel house adjoining his Lordship's, and the same you saw me in.

I was rather surprised to find such accommodations, and only lamented my want of abilities to serve so good a Patron.

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We found the house furnished in a style of elegance; but my friend assured me it always was the same for the Steward.

We were now summoned to dinner, for which I had but little appetite; but the obliging Lady C—— compelled me to take what I little wanted. After the cloth was removed, my Lord renewed the business, and told me that I should take my choice, either to keep a separate house till I was of age, or board with them till my sisters were capable of taking the domestic concerns of my house on themselves; if I chose he would allow me two hundred pounds a year, and keep my own house, or one hundred and be in his family. Your sisters will be brought up in industry and œconomy, as my Lady, said the good man, has always sufficient for young people to employ themselves in; and they will, as children, I hope, be a comfort to her, since it has pleased Heaven to with-hold, for wise purposes, that blessing from us. He bid me consider well before I answered, I told him there was no consideration necessary. The  
last

last proposal seemed to beam from Heaven on us orphans in a most extraordinary degree; and with their permission, I would gladly accept of the singular honor of becoming boarders with them; as to terms I should be fully gratified with the proposals of residence which they had made, and only wished that I might be found worthy of them; and as our patrimony would find us other necessities, I thought my addition would be an imposition on their unparalleled goodness. His Lordship seemed pleased, and her Ladyship embraced me with all the affection of a mother, and requested to know when I would bring her little daughter, who she said resembled their brother, and would soon share her warmest affection. I replied, that her Ladyship must determine upon that point. She said, then as soon as possible; we will go together in the carriage, and immediately bring them. We accordingly set off for the purpose. Matilda, who was the eldest, by her Ladyship's order, I first introduced to her new mother; she expressed her joy in once more having a mamma. Selina, who



was two years younger, I then brought ; her Ladyship embraced them in the tenderest manner. " And will you," said she, " my little dears, go and live with me? What says Selina?"—" Dear mamma, shall we ride in that coach? Is it your's?"—" Yes, my loves, you shall ride with me every day, if you are good, and dutiful to your papa and mamma." " What," says Selina, " shall we have a papa too?"—" Yes," rejoined her Ladyship, " you shall have both, and you must love us as you used to do your papa and mamma."—" Oh," exclaimed they both, " that we shall, for we always loved them; and, surely, we shall always love another papa and mamma as well, or else God will not love us, if we do not honour our parents."

This innocent freedom of speech, I hope you will pardon the repetition of; it had a wonderful effect on me at the time, and not less so on the tender and benevolent feelings of her Ladyship; their simplicity perfectly charmed her, and she enquired for their attendant, the worthy woman

woman I mentioned before ; who, when she appeared, was bathed in tears, expecting to be separated from her little orphans. —“ Are you willing,” said the good Lady, “ to go with them ? ” —“ Oh, Madam,” cried she, “ it is the only wish I have in “ the world. ” —“ Well, you shall go with “ us ; but I must enjoin you strictly to “ adhere to one thing. ” —“ Any thing,” said the poor woman, “ that will not part “ us ; I am willing to do what I am able ; “ I want no wages, only the satisfaction “ of being with them. ” ——— “ What I “ require then is, that you no more call “ these children orphans ; from this moment I am their mother, and my husband “ their father ; teach them their duty to “ us, and I will be your friend through “ life. ”

The poor woman was almost frantic with joy. After some refreshment we prepared to quit the domain long possessed by our parents. But her Ladyship, perfectly considering every circumstance, informed me, that as she must have an additional servant, if I chose to retain the

one we had, the children being used to her, she would give her the preference. This being settled, orders were given for packing up our cloaths, &c. on the following day.

Thus you see my dear friend, how wonderfully Providence interposed in our behalf. When we returned to my Lord's, he was waiting to receive us, and as soon as my Lady introduced the children to him, they clung about him, and with the most endearing prattle of youthful innocence melted into tears this venerable Nobleman. These good friends were so highly delighted with the talk of these little folks, that they would not suffer me to check them; having each one on their knee, and declaring themselves perfectly happy with infants so peculiarly placed by Providence under their care.—Oh, my friend, how can I describe my feelings on this occasion!—only a heart like your's can conceive them.

I sent for Mr. Wiseman, who I acquainted with my happy situation, and advised

advised with him about the disposition of my affairs. We agreed to sell the furniture of the house, saving only a few valuables and family pictures. This being done, my whole family became tenants under the roof of these best of people; and under the joint tuition of his Lordship and Mr. Spicer, I soon became as they were pleased to call me a dutiful son and faithful servant.—Certain it is, I made every effort to obtain their good opinion, and their partiality overlooked my imperfections.—I found my Lord universally benevolent; all his and her Ladyship's study was to promote the benefit of the indigent and afflicted; none who deserved relief were proscribed from receiving of their munificence.

About this time my Lord was projecting a plan for a school for the general use of the children of poor parents resident on his manor, which is very extensive. His object was to cloath, board and educate such as were admitted; and, young as I was, he did me the honour to consult me



on the subject. My Lord, Mr. Spicer, and myself, were each to produce a plan at a given period. I have not the vanity to suppose mine was superior to theirs; but such was their goodness, that they adopted my plan, and immediately put it in execution; and I am fully persuaded their aim was only to excite emulation in me; for, inspired as it were by their approbation, I exerted myself with unremitting assiduity, that neither my labour nor their goodness should be in vain. Happily it was accomplished before I reached my eighteenth year, to the great satisfaction of his Lordship. But though I had all the merit, yet no assistance of his, or Mr. Spicer's, which they could give, without seeming to interrupt my plan, was ever wanting. You have seen my juvenile trial; yet as you wish me to be particular, I will give you the plan.

The center is the Chapel, for morning and evening prayers, which are read by the master; it is up one story; underneath is a spacious school room, divided by railing

ing into equal parts; the one side for boys, the other for girls; the wing to the right of the building is appropriated for the master's use, that to the left for the mistress; they are allowed a salary of forty pounds each, with coal and candle. On each side there are ten tenements, for the accommodation of twenty infirm people of both sexes, who are attended by the elder children of the schools. The front is an extensive play ground, railed like the school-room, which as they are open, does not prevent the communication, though it separates them from each other. Behind there is a large kitchen-garden, and a manufactory, in which several businesses are carried on, wherein the children according to their capacities, are employed; the girls about three hours in the morning, the boys four in the afternoon. Here they manufacture their own cloaths and linen, and almost every article which is worn by the poor of the village; this enables his Lordship to extend his benevolence much farther, than if he was to keep them without that industry.—The girls

girls are taken by turns to assist in the household work, which renders more than the matron, who is appointed, at thirty pounds a year, to manage the domestic concerns, unnecessary.—On Sundays they dine in public.

Their garden yields them plenty of vegetables ; their cows supply them with milk ; and, in short, they have in their little community, a small farm, in which the boys are occasionally employed, in digging the ground, and every other requisite of husbandry ; so that when of age to leave the school, they are capable of earning their living.

Such are the particulars of the school. I now proceed to inform you of the manner of living of my Lord and Lady.—Possessed of about ten thousand pounds a year fortune, they live in an hospitable manner at about half that sum ; but having a compleat farm, his revenue derives great benefit from it. Those people who are unable to work are placed in the apartments

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ments I mentioned, where they are provided with every comfortable necessary from his Lordship's table, and even luxuries when needful. On a Sunday he dines early, and that in the servants' hall, where a surprising profusion of roast beef, boiled mutton, and puddings, is provided; to which all the family sit down, with the Steward, Housekeeper, Butler, Lady's maid, and, in short, all the upper servants, to partake of this weekly meal, which they often declare to be the best they make. They sit a very short time; and on their retiring, the doors of an anti-chamber are thrown open, when the other servants, with as many of the villagers as chuse to come, sit down to dinner, at which the cook presides. When they have done the remainder is divided among their families, and a horn of ale given to each. Thanks is then returned by his Lordship's second Chaplain, who attends for the purpose. The greatest order and decorum is preserved throughout, lest a breach of it should forfeit them this valuable privilege. It is needless to men-



tion our private exercises on that day, you having already expressed your approbation of them.

Thus, my friend, did I prosper, and, together with my sisters, daily grow in favour; quitting their infantine simplicity, they soon learnt to venerate these best of benefactors. My Lady had a principal hand in their education, and Mr. Spicer taught them the languages, in which, I am proud to say, they are not a little proficient. Our school was soon filled, and children were taken in at four years old, which afforded great relief to their poor parents. His Lordship, in order to excite emulation among these young scholars, caused some trifle to be given every Monday to the one who best went through the week's exercises. This produced the desired effect, for they, in general, did credit to their teachers.

His Lordship and Lady are both great advocates for matrimony; and, for a number of years have given a marriage portion

portion to four couple of good character who might apply for it; and at the Easter recess, if more than that number offer, they are voted for, though seldom any are rejected. They never receive less than fifty pounds, and if there be but four couple, more.

The custom is thus: At Easter, my Lord gives a ball at his own room to as many as choose to send for tickets, for which no one pays less than half a guinea; and as every one pays, he gives no particular invitations; but there are few of the gentry within forty or fifty miles who do not attend. The names sent are entered in a book, and the whole subscription equally divided among those for whom it is raised. If it amounts to less than fifty pounds each his Lordship makes up the sum. This, indeed, seldom happens, as they often share near one hundred pounds each. Supper, and every refreshment is given at his Lordship's sole expence, and beds are provided for as many as wish to stay the night.

Such is the annual marriage festival, which has for its end domestic happiness and conjugal love; for by means of this little dowry, they are enabled to begin the world with decency and industry. When an increase of family takes place, on notice being given to her Ladyship, my sisters are employed in providing every kind of necessary for the young strangers, as also for the mother during her confinement. One or other of them visits every day, and the Doctor of the village is paid yearly for his attendance. Every one within its boundary is happy and satisfied with their condition, and hence has it justly acquired its present name—The Vale of Felicity.

My sisters were introduced to this kind of visitation as soon as her Ladyship thought it decent to take children with her, and they soon became adepts in the arts of nursing. Thus glides on our time, year after year, in acts of benevolence to our fellow-creatures.—When I came of age, the event was celebrated with

with as much festivity as on a recent occasion, though not so much joy to me, in receiving Heaven's purest gift in the person of your amiable sister.

My benefactors at this time wished me to begin housekeeping; but which I, however declined till Matilda attained her eighteenth year, when I commenced master of a family, and continued so two years, till you, my friend came and interrupted our regularity, by perfecting our bliss.

I need repeat no more; and hope your pardon, if I have been too prodigal of my own or sister's merit. I am certain I have not done justice to those exalted characters, under whose patronage and protection both me and my sisters have been so honourably reared. Words would weakly express the sense I have of the obligation—of their merits, and of my own unworthiness. — Ever shall a grateful recollection of their unnumbered kindnesses dwell in my heart—when we were  
poor



poor and unfrinded, they cherished and supported us—they shielded us young and tender shrubs from the blights of misfortune and adversity, and happily transplanted us into a real Vale of Felicity.

Your's sincerely,

T. MITFORD.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

THE

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THE  
VALE OF FELICITY.

VOL. II.

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LETTER XXXVII.

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DUKE OF —

TO

SIR HARRY EVELYN.

I HAVE exactly followed the advice of my dear friend, and find my favoured fair one in every respect equal to my wishes; nothing but the formality of law now keeps us from the blissful state I so ardently long for. Make haste, my friend, come and teach me how to make a jovial, rational, and happy throng. All my friends, who, by their example have taught

taught me what true happiness is, must  
share my felicity. As soon as you come,  
all things will be settled, and your friend  
soon be made the happiest of mortals.

Let the dull sluggard, Time, then shake his glass,  
And make the flow-pac'd moments quicker pass.

Your's sincerely.

LETTER

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## LETTER XXXVIII

*MR. WARTON TO MR. MITFORD.*

**T**HANKS to you, my ever dear friend, for your agreeable epistle, which proved doubly welcome, my Selina having borne a part in it. I commiserated the first part where you told me of the loss of your valuable parents; but what words can paint, or pen describe those paragons of human nature. I revere both my Lord and Lady as if they were my own parents. Sure never mortals acted so nobly, so benevolently, not only to you or your's, but to the world at large. How worthy of imitation.—Oh! did but the wealthy know the heart-felt satisfaction of such god-like virtue, how would their hearts recoil to see their fortunes squandered, their constitutions ruined, their families dishonoured, and not one bare memento left to transmit their names with honour to posterity; and whose vices only live  
in



in remembrance, when their bodies are mouldering into dust.

Those worthy people will be immortalized, and their virtues live in memory till time shall be no more. What favourites of Heaven must you my friends have been, to become so happily possessed of perfection, bliss without alloy. Pardon what you may, perhaps, call envious; but, be assured, my soul beats high with benevolent emulation, and I long for nothing so much as finding proper objects to bestow my bounty upon. Heaven be praised, my amiable wife will not only be a helper, but a teacher in this arduous, this delightful business. I have also an able assistant in my brother Dean, and as promising a deputy in Mr. Williams, my young Chaplain, who seems to retain the most refined notions of duty to our fellow mortals: His history may not be unentertaining to you.

I met with him at early prayers one morning, during our visit to the metropolis, and after service made my obedience to him; which he returned in a manner that greatly prejudiced me in his

his favour. His devotion seemed unaffected, which is not often seen in our Churches; but when he was divested of his robes, his dress for a Clergyman was mean in the extreme; this more particularly excited my curiosity. I asked him how long he had been engaged at that Church; for, as I was but lately from the country, I was unacquainted with the circumstance. He answered with a tear glistening in his eyes, that he only officiated occasionally for the Curate, at a stipulated price, which for the credit of the sacred function, I will not mention; I saw his distress too evident not to feel a wish to relieve him; I therefore entreated his company the following day to dinner, giving him my address, with my purse, which was but ill supplied, requesting his name at the same time, which he gave me; and bowed with a silent modesty, which much affected me. You may remember I introduced him at dinner, on the day appointed; and I endeavoured to behave to him as a familiar acquaintance, in order to relieve him of his embarrassment as much as possible. After dinner, as you  
must

must recollect, we separated into parties, and Williams and I took a turn in Hyde-Park; when after some common discourse, I begged to know his circumstances; he assured me as far as poverty could reduce him; he said he was unworthy to keep the company of a gentleman; but if an honest and untainted heart could recommend he was not unworthy the honour I did him. I asked him if he would accept a Chaplainship? He replied, he was willing to take any thing which was not derogatory to the sacred function he professed; but he once had been instituted Chaplain to a Nobleman, who wished to make him sacrifice his peace and character to the worst of purposes, that of being a pecurator in ordinary to his Lordship, which, he thanked Heaven he was proof against, though golden bates were not wanting with promises of preferment. These however, he rejected with horror, which was the principal occasion of his present poverty; I commended this resolution in him, and told him I wanted a person of his character and principles to be with me, whom I could look upon as a friend

friend and brother. He thanked me in the warmest terms of gratitude, and assured me, that nothing on his part should be wanting to further my best wishes in whatever was proper or lawful for him to engage in. I then begged to know his family and place of nativity, of which he gave me the following account.

My father and mother I know not, neither the place of my birth: I was taken up from the wreck of a vessel by the Captain and crew of a merchant ship in the India Company's service, at the age of about one year, as near as they could surmise: This, Sir, is all I know of my family or birth; but Captain Williams, which was the name of my preserver, behaved with uncommon humanity; he nursed and fed me himself, and I slept in his bosom; we were two months as he has often informed me, before we reached the Indies; as soon as he got to shore he provided me a nurse, had me baptized after his name, which was John Williams, and so great was his affection for me, that he could not leave me



me behind, though much importuned by his friends to that purpose.

My nurse and I embarked with him for England, after a stay of about three months. My adopted father took the utmost care of me, and we reached England in safety, after a prosperous voyage of three months more, and he carried me home to his wife with him; but, unfortunately for him, it broke the harmony of their future life; the Lady positively said I was his son; she could trace all his features in my face, and doubtless, my mother had been the voyage with him, which his pretended fondness would not let her take. In vain did he protest, in vain did the ship's crew swear, she was so implacable, that unless he took from me his protection, she would never forgive him; this was too severe a trial of his humanity, and though he loved his wife with the most ardent affection, he rather chose to forego the sweets of domestic happiness, than desert the orphan whom Providence had so peculiarly given him from the womb of the ocean. She, indeed, promised to take the care of me upon herself,

self, with a proviso, that he should never see me more; to which he peremptorily declared he never would consent, a mutual separation took place, and I was taken with him a second voyage. So firm was his affection towards me, and so great his apprehensions for my safety, that he has often declared, he would sooner have parted with his life than have left me behind, or even had me out of his sight.

Our voyage was long and tedious, as we went to Bengal, Madras, and China. I was three years old when we returned; and had still the same nurse, whose fondness for me, together with the loss of his wife's affection, induced him to make her a partner of his bed and board in the ship. She was amiable and tender; but the severe struggle he had to conquer his wife's former unkindness, brought on an illness, which nearly terminated his existence; during which, her care and attention were unremitted; and friendship and gratitude soon formed itself into love, though of an unlawful nature. But I must plead an excuse for him, since nothing but

but the wife's implacability could have induced him to form such an idea. When we arrived in England, he proposed leaving the sea for some time, and paid the utmost attention to my education; he instructed me in the first part of my learning, which though trivial in itself, was extremely pleasing to him. We lived in this manner, my careful nurse still attending me, till I reached my sixth year, during which time, he employed his utmost endeavours to regain his wife's affection, but she was still obdurate; he determined to risque another voyage, therefore it was thought necessary to put me to a boarding school, and my nurse, and him both parted from me with the deepest concern. I soon made myself very happy in my new situation, and my benefactor I saw no more, till I had reached my tenth year; but a friend of his paid all my necessities.

He was quite charmed with the progress I had made in my learning, and declared his wishes were that I should take to the Church, if my inclination was not averse to it. He staid in England till I was of an age to go to College, and left a  
suitable

suitable sum for my maintenance till I could take orders, when he embarked once more on a perilous voyage to the east; his mind was so unsettled, that he could take no pleasure in his native land; he had lost my dear nurse and his companion on his return the time before, and that I should take orders at a proper time was all the comfort he possessed. Since that time I have had no tidings of my friend and father. Tears for a while interrupted the speech of this amiable young man, when he regained his spirits, he then proceeded. After I left College, I was at a loss for a maintenance, as my protector had left no more than kept me during my probationary state.

I applied to his friend, who received me with coolness; said he had heard nothing of the Captain, and knew not how he could have been so infatuated as to give me the education he had; but since I had got it, he wished me success, and told me I must make the best use I could of it. Moreover, said he, I will do one thing for you, and as you behave in that, I may, or may not continue my favor.

VOL. II.

I

Here



Here is a letter, take it to the Nobleman I will direct you to; he wants a Chaplain; if you please him, you may be preferred; if not, I have done with you.

I thankfully accepted the kind offer, and waited on his Lordship, who received me with smiles, apparently pleased with my person, and desired me to attend the next day to officiate; but guess my surprise when his Lordship led me to an antichamber which was filled with painted beauties of the most debauched and depraved kind. On introducing me to them, he told them I was appointed to teach them their duty to him; and turning to me, "And you, Sir, according to their behaviour, are to appoint them their times to fulfill my pleasures: if two are very good I can put up with two each night."

I was struck speechless with horror, my teeth chattered, and I trembled with indignation at the wretch. He perceived my confusion, and haughtily said, "Sir, I do not mean to prohibit you the use of any of these Ladies whom you can persuade to answer your wishes, and  
"there's

"there's none of them very coy, for I am  
"not fond of such kind, I assure you."

At length I recovered my speech, and with a contemptuous and vehement look, I replied, "What, Sir, do you take me  
"for! I came here as Chaplain, and in  
"what kind of manner do you treat the  
"messenger from Heaven, as a Pimp?—  
"No, Sir, I despise you and your detestable house." (Here they all burst into a horse laugh) his Lordship however continued his discourse, and in a tone of irony asked, "What use think  
"you is a Parson of, but what I expected  
"of you? Perhaps I may in time make  
"you a Bishop; you would not be the  
"first, and then you might keep a Pimp  
"yourself." I could scarce contain my resentment, and replied, "He might be  
"ashamed of himself to treat a gentleman,  
"and a minister, in so vile a manner."—  
"Oh!" said he, "we will soon shew you  
"the way you came: here girls turn this  
"fellow out your own way," with that they set on me like so many furies, except a perfect beauty, in whose countenance melancholy was strongly depicted, and  
I 2 who

who begged them to let the gentleman out, without using him ill; they then took me to a door which opened into a lane, and while they were pushing me out, the fair one took hold of my coat, crying, "for heaven's sake take me from this hell of hells, or I perish!" and giving a spring, we were both without the threshold. She cried, "Fly my preserver! fly, or we shall again be entrapped in that infernal mansion!"

Scarcely had we attained the street, ere we heard a dismal shriek from the unhappy wretches we had left, and we bent our course with speed till we should arrive at a place of safety. "Whither, said I, shall I conduct you?"—"Oh! my God!" said the unhappy fair, "wherever you will; I have no home, no friend unless you prove one."

Imagining it would assist us to elude the vigilance of the monster, we had just escaped from, should he be inclined to pursue us, as well as to afford the fair fugitive time to recover from the distraction of spirits, she had been hurried into by the fortuitous events of the morning; we entered

entered the first house that presented itself as inviting us to partake of that hospitality our money entitled us to, and being shewn into a private room, the fair stranger burst into a flood of tears, which I did not attempt to restrain, concluding the agitation of her mind would be relieved, and she thereby enabled to satisfy that curiosity with which I felt myself already filled. The disorder and violent emotion of her spirits having a little subsided, I enquired tenderly into the cause of her sorrow, encouraging her with the most lively expressions friendship could dictate to reveal to me her situation, declaring in expressive terms my readiness to engage in any measures she should deem most adviseable to relieve her from her present distress. She expressed her thanks with the most amiable gratitude, "and though," said she, "you may despise me from the place you found me in, if you will, I am certain, give me your pity, at least when you know my unhappy story," I begged her to repeat it, if she thought she should be able to support the affecting recital.



"I am," said she, "the daughter of a  
"wealthy merchant in the north of Eng-  
"land, of the name of Herbert, who in  
"the former part of his life had been un-  
"fortunate, losing most of his property,  
"together with his wife and an infant son,  
"in a storm at sea; he was providentially  
"picked up by a fishing smack, and carri-  
"ed safe to shore, from whence, after in-  
"numerable hardships, he reached his  
"native place, and soon after, travelling  
"further into the north, he married my  
"mother, which in some degree retrieved  
"his fortune.

"I was the only fruit of this marriage,  
"and am now seventeen. Unhappily for  
"me, the wretch at whose house you  
"found me has a seat near my father's; a  
"monster cloathed in the insignia of your  
"sacred order, paid his addresses to me.  
"I received them with pleasure, but he  
"artfully persuaded me not to acquaint  
"my father with the circumstance, to  
"which, blinded by love, I consented, till  
"in an unfortunate hour, I was decoyed  
"by him to visit the house of his infernal  
"master,

"master, imagining myself the sole object  
"of his affections, as he was of mine.

"Oh! Sir, think what were my sensations on being led into an apartment,  
"where my Lord lay reclining on a couch,  
"when presented to him by my infamous  
"seducer," who said, "Here, my Lord,  
"is the angel I informed you of; I now  
"deliver her, in all her blooming charms,  
"to the paradise of your arms." "My  
"Lord quickly approaching, the wretch  
"instantly withdrew, while I fainted into  
"the arms of the despoiler of my youth,  
"my innocence, my fame, and virtue.

"On recovering, I found him very assiduous in his endeavours to revive me; he knelt at my feet, he implored my love, and pleaded his passion in such terms, which I could not have thought any one but a man of honour impressed with the sincerity of love, was capable of uttering.

"In vain I begged to go home to my father; in vain did my tears plead for me, till the horrid approach of night filled me with the most dreadful apprehensions. A splendid supper was provided in an adjoining room, into which I was forced;

but I saw no domestics, nor any other man, except the villain who was to be my destruction, seated with five or six of those unhappy prostitutes, who long trained in the ways of infamy, are hardened against the feelings of humanity. They used their utmost persuasion to induce me to eat, but in vain; and in their dissipated libations, wine was frequently pressed upon me with like effect. They all assumed the utmost gaiety and cheerfulness, in compliment to me; bestowed the most disgusting flatteries on my beauty, and congratulated his Lordship on his new acquisition. Wine they so frequently endeavoured to force upon me, that I shuddered at the idea of their solicitation; and, I believe, nothing but the horror with which my mind was inspired preserved my senses, or my life.

“After some time had been consumed in such shameless scenes of riot, these harpies of women forced me into a bed, where by violence they undressed me. But here terminated not their brutality towards me; for even then, weak and exhausted as I was, without strength to  
make

make the least resistance, they brought in the detestable monster; nor could the distress of my situation plead within the bosom of the wretch, to prevent him from accomplishing his purpose.

“The fright, fatigue, and horror, I endured during this interval, threw me into a violent fever; and at midnight, on the night after I had been so barbarously dishonoured, I was put into a post-chaise, along with two of the women I have before mentioned, and brought to this house of infamy, where Heaven in mercy, has directed you to find and free me!—Let me now, Sir, conjure you to afford me your protection, till I can learn my father’s disposition towards me; and who, I trust, will joyfully and gratefully repay all the trouble you may have on my account.”

“I readily acquiesced, and took her with me to my lodgings, begging of my landlady, who was a good sort of a woman, to see that this young lady might be supplied with every necessary for a few days, and I would satisfy her trouble, and



every attendant expence. This she punctually complied with.

“ It is now a fortnight since I wrote in her behalf to her father; and though every circumstance was fully explained, have as yet received no answer. In the mean time, I have been quite in distress for all necessaries, except victuals, for us both, which my landlady provides; but if her father should fail us, I know not how I shall be enabled to discharge the debts we have already contracted.

“ I have officiated a few mornings at the church where you found me; but the pittance I receive would scarce pay the expence of a breakfast. Through your generosity yesterday, I have recovered the suit in which you now see me; and therefore, with the deepest gratitude, accept your offered Chaplaincy; but, at the same time, intreat your secrecy respecting what I have informed you of, till circumstances shall make a repetition necessary; and hope you will with me commiserate the unhappy fair of whom I have been speaking. I shall, with your permission, devote your intended salary to her use, but beg  
you

you will free me from any suspicion unworthy the sacred character I bear: While she remains under my protection, my morsel must be her's, as I am convinced her conduct is irreproachable, and know myself only to be actuated by the purest motives of humanity."

Here he paused, and I replied——  
"Think not my dear friend, for so I shall henceforth call you, that my esteem will be lessened by the ingenuous confidence you have reposed in me; believe me it has rivetted my interest with your's; I know not which most to admire or abhor in your relation—your providential preservation, or the implacability of the Captain's wife; your behaviour, or my Lord's infamy—nor less your generous interposition and humanity in effecting an escape with the unhappy Miss Herbert.

"You ought not by any means to repine; since it is plain you were sent by Heaven to rescue innocence from the engulfing vortex of vice and all its concomitants of penury, disease, and wretchedness. I will relieve you from your

embarrassment, and become myself the protector of the much injured lady.— You, nevertheless, shall have the credit, since I would not offend her delicacy by intruding myself into her presence.”

He respectfully bowed; and we by this time had reached home to tea.—He continued with us; and you, doubtless, remember the rest of the evening. I desired him to call the next morning at nine, when I presented him with a draft to satisfy his pecuniary demands. He retired with the most expressive looks of gratitude and happiness. You have since beheld his exemplary piety; and, though he may be said to keep this excellent girl, I am confident his mind is fraught with the purest principles of religion, and unaffected virtue and goodness.

I have run my letter to an amazing length, but trust the subject will plead my excuse.

My school fills well; and I have appointed Mr. Williams Governor of it, as it may be the means of keeping the others more attentive and strict to their duty.

Another

Another person I have also provided, for the purpose of properly instructing in navigation, and other necessary branches of maritime education, such poor children, whose parents are not averse, and whose inclinations lead them to follow the sea.

Friendly as I am to the true interests of my country, and that grand bulwark, our Navy, which first acquired, and still protects them, I have long lamented that institutions of this nature have not been more generally adopted. I think, my dear friend, were our nobility and wealthy gentry to adopt this mode of having the children of their poor tenants brought up, it would supersede the necessity of the cruel custom of impressing men from their families and home—a violent exertion of power, under the specious pretext of State necessity, that fills my mind with horror and detestation. If the half of my fortune would avail to prevent it, I would freely give it. I should esteem any hints you can give on this subject a favour, as I may hereafter find them serviceable.

Begging my sincere and heart-felt respect for my Lord and Lady, with unfeigned  
love



love and friendship to yourself, I am, my  
dear sister,

Your's in the firmest bond,

T. WARTON.

P. S. I shall continue Williams and Miss  
Herbert in my next.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIX.

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MRS. WARTON TO MRS. MITFORD.

DEAR SISTER,

WE have just received a circular letter from the Duke, containing an invitation to celebrate his marriage with the accomplished Miss L——. Oh, what a happiness must we all feel in contributing to the happiness of any one!—and that, in this instance, we may be proud to say we are; for this amiable couple date the commencement of their happiness from the æra in which they witnessed the felicity we enjoyed. I have some hope this will also prove a treble wedding, as Townly and Captain ——, actuated by similar principles, have made a formal renunciation of their whole train of vices, and declared their intentions of entering the matrimonial list. Heaven grant they may be no less successful than we have been!—and, according to their fortunes,

fortunes, may they imitate our example—so shall their endeavours be rewarded with permanent happiness, and the comforts of social intercourse expel the wanderings of roving fancy and contagious folly.

I beg leave to offer my sincere duty to those best of people, who are the fountain of all this substantial good, and love to yourself and brother.

I shall defer some pleasing intelligence to our meeting at the Duke's—the whole assemblage that were present on the former occasion are invited——Once more adieu.

Your's,

SELINA WARTON.

LETTER

LETTER XL.

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MR. WARTON TO MR. MITFORD.

I N continuance, as I promised, I now resume my pen. By Mr. Williams's consent, I acquainted Selina with the story of Miss Herbert, who no sooner heard it, but she exclaimed, " Good Heavens! " what analogy between her story and " Mrs. Herbert's? But," said she; with her usual sagacity, " should it be even so, " would it not be cruelty in the extreme " to acquaint Mrs. Herbert with it?— " That good woman acknowledges herself " as happy as she can possibly be; and " should we even suffer her to surmise her " husband was alive, and attached to " another, it might, perhaps, drive her to " distraction." " What a just argument " my love," said I, embracing her, " and " how happy am I in having obtained " Mr. Williams's permission to acquaint " you with it!—Had I, perhaps, digested " the



“ the history as I heard it, unawed by  
“ thy superior sense and discretion. I might  
“ have gone and informed that valuable  
“ friend and, by the rashness of my con-  
“ duct, been productive of those fatal con-  
“ sequences you so wisely foresaw, and  
“ providentially prevented.”

While we were in this conversation, a servant acquainted me, that Mr. Williams wished to speak with me, if disengaged. I immediately ordered him to be introduced, when he presented me with a letter from Miss Herbert's father, of which I send you an exact copy.

LETTER

## LETTER XLI.

TO

*THE REV. MR. WILLIAMS.*

SIR,

**I**F a distracted father and a distressed husband can plead an excuse for not answering your letter before, I claim it as a benevolent act; and had you not so lately wrote to me, I might never have been sensible of your goodness.

You informed me of the name of the wretch who dishonoured my daughter; and I instantly sought revenge; but my rage was baffled on finding the villain was gone abroad. In my frantic distress, I lost your direction, which augmented my distress. In addition to this affliction, I received another wound by the death of my wife; who overcome by the horror of my situation, together with the loss of her only daughter and child, she fell a  
martyr

martyr to a broken heart, and I, by these concurrent circumstances of adverse fortune, an unhappy widower.

I, therefore, my dear Sir, earnestly beg you will again favour me with your address, that I may breath my sorrows on my child's faithful bosom, and console her wounded mind with the knowledge that she has still a father to sympathize with her sorrow. If you can inform me where to meet the villain who has robbed her of her innocence, I am determined to avenge her wrongs—I madden with the idea, and am utterly incapable of writing more——

I am, dear Sir,

Your's,

J. HERBERT.

LETTER

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## LETTER XLII.

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IN CONTINUATION.

MR. WILLIAMS begged my advice on this occasion; which having received, as well as that of my Selina, he immediately penned an answer, and dispatched it by express.—He then, accompanied by Selina, who was now interested in her behalf, went to visit the unhappy fair, and by degrees acquainted her with the death of her mother. She was fixed and motionless, and seemed without the power of venting her grief. After an interval of some minutes, recovering her suspended senses, she exclaimed, “Oh, wretch that I am!—yet fear not to tell me—have I yet a father? or, am I also his murderer?”—They assured her she had yet a kind and tender father, who would soon be with her.—“Oh,” cried she, “how dare I look my injured parent  
“in



“ in the face! — Yet, Heaven knows, in  
“ one thing, one thing only was I ever un-  
“ dutiful to him, concealing my affection  
“ for that detestable villain, through  
“ whose contrivance I am what I am, a de-  
“ stroyer of my much-loved mother.”

They, at length, calmed her perturbed mind, and prevailed on her to see her father when he came. Selina invited her to accompany them home, which she politely refused, on account of the recent news she had received of her mother's death. They then parted, giving strict orders to the landlady closely to observe her.

When we had retired, Selina again intimated her suspicions, that this Mr. Herbert must be the husband of our dear friend; and suggested, as the case now stood, whether it would not be expedient to break the affair to her. by way of preparation; that had Miss Herbert's mother lived, such an expedient would have been improper, but under the present circumstances, it might facilitate the happiness of all parties. The more she considered the matter, the more plain she saw it must be so; and for the purpose of satisfying her

her doubts, paid Miss Herbert an early visit, who received her much better than she expected; and during her stay, which lasted some hours, she was perfectly convinced of the truth of her suspicion. Mrs. Herbert as yet had not been acquainted with any part of Mr. Williams or Miss Herbert's history.—Selina took an opportunity of introducing a conversation respecting her former misfortunes, which when mentioned, always occasioned her pathetically to lament the loss of her husband. In this conversation, Selina said, perhaps he might have been preserved as well as her—Providence is all-sufficient. “Oh, were it but so,” cried she, “what comfort would my old age enjoy!—“even in the idea I seem to feel new life.”

Selina then recounted many singular instances of a similar nature, till she was in a state of mind to receive the information, should it be necessary, as was expected. In three days Mr. Herbert arrived; and never was there a more affecting or happy meeting, clouded by the melancholy loss of the wife and mother of these two amiable

able people. After the mingled effusions of grief and joy had subsided, and Miss Herbert, on her knees, received her father's forgiveness, Mr. Williams was sent for, who received, in all the tenderness of melting tears, the grateful acknowledgments of them both, not only as having been her propitious deliverer from the hateful stew of her vile seducer, but also as having afterwards become the generous friend and protector of her distress.

Mr. Williams had been prepared by us to expect the probability of the connection between Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, he therefore, though he wished to introduce Mr. Herbert to me, judged it unadvisable to bring him to the house, and accordingly sent word he would be glad to speak with me and my wife at Miss Herbert's apartments. We immediately obeyed the summons; and after congratulating Mr. Herbert on the recovery of his daughter, I begged to speak with him and Mr. Williams. We retired: I enquired of him concerning the loss of his first lady.—  
 "Alas! Sir," said he, "she perished, with  
 " my

“my infant son, before my face, and I  
“was preserved—to be of all men the  
“most miserable!”—I then informed  
him I had great reason to believe his  
lady was still living, who had been pre-  
served in a most miraculous manner, and  
had no idea of his being saved, also  
supposing him to have perished before her  
face.—The poor man stood motionless;  
at length, in a faltering voice, he said—  
“It cannot be possible, that the idol of  
“my fond affection, my adored, should  
“be still alive, and I have given myself  
“to another!”—“It may be possible,  
“Sir,” said I, “without any blame being  
“imputable to you on that account.”—  
“Oh, Sir, pardon me, but I could never  
“forgive myself—Where is she? that I  
“may pour out my soul before her.”

I found it necessary to soothe his dis-  
tracted mind, and observed how cautious  
we ought to be, lest a too sudden inter-  
view should prove fatal to a woman of her  
refined understanding, who had dedicated  
the succeeding part of her life to his me-  
mory.—“I, Sir,” said he, “though  
“wedded to another, always held her



“ dear in remembrance—she was often  
“ the theme of my dear deceased wife’s  
“ discourse—and many a tear have I shed  
“ to the memory of her and my poor son.  
“ I always wore her picture next my  
“ heart; and now have got minia-  
“ tures of the two best women that ever  
“ blessed the arms of man. I was always  
“ fond of a conjugal life, and detested the  
“ idea of a libertine, which was the rea-  
“ son I so soon changed my widowed  
“ state.”—I begged permission to look at  
Mrs. Herbert’s picture, from which I  
might discover if our conjecture was  
right.—He immediately complied, and  
presenting me with the case, said, “ Shew  
“ me my first beloved—and I shall be  
“ happy if she can forgive an apostate  
“ husband.”——I immediately recog-  
nized Mrs. Herbert’s face, and gave him  
joy on the occasion. He fervently em-  
braced me, and begged me to be expedi-  
ous in letting him see his first adorable  
wife. He now praised the goodness of  
Heaven, in removing from a scene of dis-  
tress his late beloved spouse.—“ For,”  
said he, “ had she still lived, we had all  
“ been

“been most wretched, without the means  
“of affording each other comfort.” He  
begged me again to pardon his impati-  
ence, but he longed once more to behold  
and embrace the dearest of women.

We returned to the ladies ; and Selina,  
in the mean time, had prepared Miss  
Herbert to expect a mother-in-law. She  
also expressed satisfaction that her mother  
was removed, since Mrs. Herbert certainly  
had an antecedent right. We took our  
leave, and desired them to be ready to  
attend Mr. Williams when he should  
call on them, which would be as soon as  
possible.

When we returned, we desired Mrs.  
Herbert's company a few moments.—  
Selina asked her if she remembered the  
conversation they lately held on the sub-  
ject of Mr. Herbert. She replied, it was  
too deeply engraven on her heart ever to  
be forgotten ; but she looked on the idea  
as too visionary ever to be realized. We  
assured her it was not, for we had the most  
positive proof of his being still alive, and  
that she was as dear to him as ever. This  
last speech caused an emotion which had

nearly deprived her of her faculties; but Selina's ready care prevented it, and she expressed an anxious desire to know where she could see him, that she might breathe her last in his arms. We begged her calm attention, while we repeated with caution every circumstance we were in possession of, and assured her we had just left him and his lovely daughter. She entreated us no longer to delay their interview.

Mr. Williams ran to welcome them to our mansion.—But, oh, my dear friend, what pen or words can describe so tender, so unexpected a meeting! They immediately recognized each other, and rushed with rapture to embrace—a dead calm succeeded—and we were forced to separate them, lest one grave should unite their hapless bodies. At length reason resumed her empire; and we retired, leaving them to enjoy their private converse, and also to recover from the violent agitation they must have felt. I assure you we were not dry spectators of this affecting scene.

In about half an hour we rejoined a most happy party. Miss Herbert seemed to rejoice in her father's happiness, and  
Mr.

Mr. Williams partook of their felicity. We made them continue with us; and the more we know, the more we esteem each other.

Mr. Herbert has commenced a lawsuit against the Lordly villain, and laid his damages at ten thousand pounds, for the injury he has sustained by the dishonour of his daughter. He has received the most perfect assurance from his Council, who are eminent in the profession, that he will recover such damages.

I have omitted Mr. Herbert's personal qualifications, which no doubt you, and more especially Georgiana, will wish to know. He is above the middle size, dark complexion, fine sparkling eyes, and a shape and air quite majestic, about 45 years of age; intelligent and eloquent; a voice so agreeable as to make every hearer love him; am not jealous; but this is your sister's description of him. I will add Mrs. Herbert's, though you have seen her; but they must no more be parted.

——Her stature, when I first knew her, was gracefully genteel, it now rather inclines to corpulency, but only so much as  
adds



adds dignity to her deportment ; her arms are well turned, and her eyes, which were ever beautiful, still retain their lustre ; her face and neck rival alabaster, and I confess, when I first saw her, I loved. I made her proposals ; but she rejected them in so reasonable, sensible, and becoming a manner, on the score of perpetual widowhood, that, on promise of becoming my friend, and bringing up my sisters, I would for ever drop all thoughts on that head. This promise I have most religiously kept.

I hope we shall soon meet at the Duke of C——'s, to celebrate his nuptials, since he and some of his friends have caught the soft contagion from us. Our prayer is, that, like our flame, it may continue to burn.——I mean to give a little Fête on the reunion of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, but not just yet ; for having so recently lost his second wife, it would be indecent to rejoice, though, on the other hand, he has so much reason. Our friend insists on his wearing his mourning weeds the usual time ; and in compliment to him and Miss Herbert, she purposes doing the same.

same. We mean to confine our entertainment to our own family ; and I am sure Georgiana will have particular pleasure in being of the party.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert seem particularly attached to Mr. Williams ; to whom they all say they are indebted for the peculiar happiness they now enjoy ; and Miss Herbert expresses more than friendship to him ; but I believe his esteem reaches no further than sincere friendship ; perhaps his heart has some prior attachment ; or, perhaps, his delicacy may be too refined, after what has happened. Be it as it may, he is a valuable and a worthy young man, and a great acquisition to me.

To morrow we propose to take the diversion of hunting, and the ladies are to attend in a chaise, as close as they can. I wish my friend could be of the party, as my happiness would be more complete were we never separated ; but since it is for the public good, we must submit.

Every thing goes on with me in a prosperous manner ; we have received above thirty children into the common school, and seven into the naval one, which I hope

will be productive of national advantage—a wish that ought ever to be dear in the mind of every loyal subject.

Mrs. Herbert requests her sincerest love to Georgiana, and to you for her sake. My Selina likewise, and the worthy Dean, who took so active a part in all our concerns; to his consummate wisdom and abilities we are much indebted. Adieu, my much loved friend, and present my best respects and grateful esteem to your very worthy Patrons, whom we hope to meet with you at the Duke's next week.

Your's,

T. WARTON.

LETTER

## LETTER XLIII.

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*MISS HUET* TO *MR. WARTON*.

SO, my dear friend, public weddings seem now to be getting ground very fast; and, according to your example, Miss L ———, Miss Foster, and myself, are to be made public spectacles of. But, however, as you have run the gauntlet before us, I think the best way will be to behave patiently, more especially, as I remember I was rather taunting to Matilda on the occasion of your's, and observed, that, had we been in your place, we should have behaved better. But, to be serious, the Duke has sent to Townly and my Captain, and has got the consent of all parties to celebrate their nuptials with his own. Certainly he does us great honour by the request; and has promised, in return, to spend a month with Townly and us at our respective seats; so, accord-



ing to that account, the honey-moon must last at least three months, which is something very novel, I am informed, in the fashionable world.—But should our swains continue in their present mood, I know not when this same moon will change. Pardon my levity, dear Warton; but Heaven grant our unions, like your's, may be propitious to our happiness. I rejoice that you are all to be of the party; and my dear mamma intends if possible to be present; the Captain is exceedingly obliging to her, and she is no less fond of him. We talk in rapture of your felicity, and intend to make your virtues the object of our imitation.

You will be pleased to present my sincerest respects to Mrs Warton, and best thanks to ~~him~~ for coming to England, and setting out in a career which has excited such universal emulation in the Great World. I sincerely wish the example may extend its influence, as it must in its effect be not only conducive of individual felicity, but of national prosperity; as tending to the relief of distress, and the encouragement of virtue and industry; it  
would

would rescue the poor from their rude state of ignorance and impiety, and diffuse among them the inestimable blessings of religion.

Adieu, my ever dear friend till we meet, as it probably will be the last epistle from,

Your's sincerely,

K. HUET.

## LETTER XLIV.

*MRS. WARTON TO MISS HUET.*

RECEIVE my warmest congratulations, my ever dear friend, on your approaching felicity, which I trust will prove as firm and happy in its consequences as that of your friends bids fair for. If our happiness can receive any augmentation, it is from the arrival of my dear Matilda and her Captain, who sincerely rejoices at her friend's union with Lord Townly.—Matilda's felicity beams on her lovely countenance, and can only be equalled by the joy and satisfaction which on every occasion actuates her beloved husband; indeed one would be led to imagine, that she had formerly pined in secret, as she is now all sprightliness and vivacity: May such ever be the reward of virtuous constancy—the fruit of the education we received under the auspices of the

the good Lord and Lady C——. My beloved Warton imitates the bright example of this worthy nobleman in almost every action of his life.

An astonishing occurrence has lately happened respecting the amiable Mrs. Herbert, which I shall reserve till I have the pleasure of a personal interview. It gives me pleasure to learn that your mamma will grace your nuptials; beg my best respects to her, and love to your sister, who will doubtless accompany her mamma.

I beg to be remembered to your gallant Captain, whom I think deserving of the prize he is about to receive. I pardon your levity at present, but when you become a wife I expect you will leave it, and remain with the utmost sincerity,

Miss Huet's friend,

SELINA WARTON.

LETTER



## LETTER XLIV.

*MRS. WARTON TO MISS HUET.*

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Miss Huet's friend,

SELINA WARTON.

LETTER

## LETTER XLV.

*MR. WARTON TO MR. MITFORD.*

**I**T was my intention not to have written to you till after the nuptial feast, but the very extraordinary circumstance which has lately occurred, has made me impatient to communicate it to you and my sister. I hinted in my last our design of forming a hunting party, but in the height of our diversion poor Williams was unfortunately thrown from his horse, and had very much bruised one leg; the ladies made room in the carriage, and hastened to Sir George Montague's house, which was nearest; but how shall I describe what ensued?—It requires the pencil of Hogarth, or the pen of Fielding to paint the scene. Mr. Williams was in excessive pain, and we were all busy in getting off his boot; Mrs. Herbert insisted on the privilege of bathing his leg with something she got from Lady Montague for the purpose;

purpose ; Sir George and his son, a youth about eighteen, had been with us, and we were all in a great parlour ; but no sooner had Mrs Herbert pulled down his stocking, than, with a violent scream, she fell senseless on the floor, Mr. Herbert supposed the sight of the bruise had occasioned this emotion, and every hand was employed in administering to her without effect ; poor Williams was in little better condition, and she was taken into an adjoining room, where only Mr. Herbert and the ladies attended her. We proceeded in our endeavours to ease the pains of Williams ; but the pain he now felt was that of his heart, on account of poor Mrs. Herbert. At length a surgeon was brought, who opened a vein, and she began to breathe, but so incoherent was her returning speech, that, though she wished to be understood, it was for a long time impossible ; at length she seized on Mr. Herbert with violence, and cried, " Take me to him, 'tis he ! 'tis he ! "—" Who, my dear, do you wish to see ? I will conduct you any where. Speak, my dear, where shall I take you ?—" " Oh ! to him ! to him ! "

was



was all she could articulate, and she fainted in his arms. We were now still more alarmed, as we could not possibly devise what could occasion it, since the bruise was neither frightful or dangerous. With proper applications at length she began to resume her senses and speech; and Mr. Herbert still holding her in his arms, she exclaimed, "Where is my son, my dear son? let me see him, to embrace him this moment!"—we all began to stare at each other; but Mr. Herbert calmly said, "My dear love compose yourself, and be more explicit, that we may understand what you mean."—"Oh, his leg," said she—"don't you remember that particular mark he had on his legs both alike; do, my dear," said she, "be so good as let me look at it again, and I shall be satisfied." She needed to say no more, Mr. Herbert perfectly understood her, and quitting her immediately, like a man wild, flew to the room where he left Williams, who was gone to lay down in an upper room; his distraction made him almost as incoherent as his wife had been, and hastily he desired to be shewn where

Williams

Williams was ; Sir George and I accompanied him. He no sooner saw him, but falling on the bed, he clasped him in a warm embrace—— “ My son, my dear son ! ” was all he could utter.

We explained, as well as we were able, to Williams, who now was half dead with fear, this uncommon incident ; he immediately pulled down both his stockings, which exhibited a remarkable appearance on both legs, similar to what Mrs. Herbert had expressed. Mr. Herbert, by the help of the Doctor and some cordials, was recovered ; and the ladies made their appearance, leading in Mrs. Herbert, who embraced her son with the most maternal marks of affection ; and Mr. Herbert and all present mutually embraced. It was now dinner time, and Sir George and his lady insisted on our staying, which we could not well refuse. The lovely Miss Herbert bore no small share on this occasion ; but I do not know that it is an event agreeable to her sentiment ; for, I believe, her affection was of the softer kind—his as a brother. For Selina I was under much apprehension,

as

as such agitations are too much for a delicate frame like her's, more especially in her present situation. I did not intend this intelligence till we met, when I hoped to congratulate you on the same account; but as it is over, I will not recall it. We were not much in a mind for eating; but Sir George, with great sagacity and good nature, insisted on there being no questions asked till after dinner, when we would gladly hear them. Accordingly after the cloth was removed, and the servants withdrawn, Mr. Herbert requested Sir George's permission to hear his son's singular history; this being granted, Mr. Williams recounted his story with much modesty, and particularly regretted his want of knowledge of his patron, and of the unhappy separation betwixt him and his wife, occasioned by a false jealousy on his account, which during this repetition often brought tears into his eyes.

The story was a sympathetic one, with which none but Selina and myself were acquainted, to whom I had disclosed it but very lately. After Mr. Williams had finished, Sir George begged a hearing;  
he

he said, he still hoped the Captain and his wife were happy; as he had received a letter from him about a month ago, which contained an account of his having been taken by pirates, sold for a slave on the Coast of Guinea, and mentioning his uneasiness about this young man he had patronized; desiring Sir George to enquire of his friend concerning him, to whom he had wrote, but received no answer, and was therefore uneasy on the account.—

Sir George said, he was sorry to observe, he had found, this false friend whose evasive answers were very unsatisfactory; and what Mr. Williams had related confirmed his suspicions, that the wretch not hearing of the Captain, supposed him dead, and therefore refused to advance the necessary supplies, meanly purposing to convert them to his own emolument. He said he was a friend of both the Captain and his lady, and it was with grief he heard of their separation; and confessed he was rather inclined to the lady's side of the question. He was happy, however to find the Captain a man of so much honour, rectitude, resolution and humanity.

He



He would immediately send for Mrs. Williams to be a witness of her own incredulity, and speedily let the Captain know where his adopted son was, with the revolution in his affairs: and doubted not but, through such a mediation as we could form, we should unite in mature age what was impracticable in the bloom of youth. We were compelled by this worthy neighbour and his lady to spend the day and evening, and went home about eleven.

Oh, my friend, what an affecting narrative! and what emotions of joy must those worthy people feel at recovering their lost hope, and being thus by the goodness of Providence preserved for each other?—And, lastly, what a strange accident developed the concealed son?—Had his history been known, Mrs. Herbert might have conjectured the circumstance, and discovery been early made; but it was not to be so; and I am happy in the reflection that Mr. Williams now Herbert, had not set his affections on his beautiful sister. I wish her's may not be so either, lest it should imbitter the peace of their parents.

Sir

Sir  
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Sir George's son paid more than common attention to Miss Herbert, and seemed visibly affected with the part that related to her being decoyed into a villain's power; which though abhorrent in the extreme, is now the less to be regretted, as from that circumstance flows the source of their present joy; and he who values such intrinsic worth the less for that circumstance is not worthy of her. It is clear beyond a doubt, that Heaven permitted these circumstances to further its own wise ends; to show the instability of human affairs, and to bring about a meeting between those whom adverse fortune had rent asunder. I shall tire you with my tedious comments; but hope for an excuse. I think I shall not trouble you again 'till after the nuptial Jubilee. As I hope for no more tales like those to recount. The young Mr Herbert, I should have told you, has declared his intention of continuing with me, though his father has offered to buy him a living wherever he can hear of one to his mind; but he will not listen to it. They both wait with anxious impatience to acknowledge their  
gratitude

gratitude to the worthy and humane Captain; after which Mr. Herbert, sen. will return to settle his affairs in the North, and then come and settle near us. Thus, I think, in a short time, we shall have a new Colony in this place.

Mrs. Herbert will remain with Miss Herbert and her long lost son, and seems to show an equal fondness for both. Inclosed is a letter to Georgiana from Mrs. Austin, who, I am happy to find, means to conduct her children to England herself. Mr. and Mrs. Dean, Mrs. Herbert and son, with myself and better half, desire you will accept our sincere love and friendship.

Your's in the firmest bonds,

T. WARTON.

LETTER

## LETTER XLV.

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MRS. DEAN TO MRS. AUSTIN.

EVER DEAR SISTER,

WE received your's, and with the greatest joy anticipated our arrival in England, and that of my dear nephew and neice. We should have been happy had it suited Mr. Austin to have accompanied you, but since it did not we must be content. As I was Secretary to you on the occasion of our nuptial ceremony, I must now give you a short account of our visit on a similar happy occasion, to the Duke of ———, whom I mentioned in my last, and who took so agreeable and active part in our rejoicings. The Miss L——, of whom I took notice, is the accomplished fair one to whom his Grace is united;——— a more elegant and lovely couple never attended the sacred altar. Mr. Dean had the peculiar honour of joining their hands, as also those of  
Lord



Lord Townly and the gay and sprightly Miss Foster, a particular friend of Mr. Mitford's; likewise Matilda and Captain Wilson, and Miss Huet, the friend of Selina, my brother's amiable spouse. The marriage ceremony was performed in the same manner as ours; and, by desire of the parties, the good Lord and Lady C—— conducted the first day's ceremony, at which none but the most intimate friends were present, us excepted, and such as were of a steady behaviour becoming the solemnity of the day and occasion, as it was on a Sunday.

Monday was ushered in by bells ringing, music playing, shepherds dancing; and every diversion rustic innocence could devise was exhibited on this day. The gentlemen seem to have taken such a relish for conjugal life and domestic felicity from our example, that I know my dear sister will heartily join with us in joy that we have been so useful; we continued three days with this noble and hospitable family, and when we retired, left numbers still to join the festive board; all was gaiety, that is, innocent gaiety and mirth;

mirth; and every thing which was practised with us, was here resumed; and the Duke told my Lord C ——— he intended to become his rival in benevolence, at which his Lordship seemed greatly pleased, and sincerely wished so many might be impelled by the same motives as to form an host of rivals. He dared them all to the conflict, and wished only to live to see humanity and benevolence extend their balmy influence.

I shall say no more on this head; you may conceive the rest; but shall inclose the history of our dear friend and governess, Mrs. Herbert, for your perusal, which I am persuaded both yourself and husband will be happy to see, the revolution which has taken place is astonishing, but not the less true, as you will see on your arrival.

My brother's school increases daily; and though the expence seems heavy, yet it is not half so much as an uninterested spectator would imagine; for the greater part of the children earn their liv-

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ing,

ing, which makes the burden easy. You will please to take all our remembrance to yourself, husband, and children of the happy band, and remain, dear sister, ever your's, in the name of all, as before,

MARIA DEAN.

LETTER

## LETTER XLVI.

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*MR. WARTON TO MR. MITFORD.*

WELL now my dear friend, I hope we are again quietly seated at home. How long this peace with each other may last, I know not, but must congratulate you on the prospect of the increase of your family, which I understand is nearer than that of my own; but it signifies nothing, you will be entitled to his Grace's honour and bounty the first, unless some of the villagers should step in and claim a prior right; however I hope to attend no other Jubilee till that takes place, and I care not if all claim, they shall not go empty away. I shall now conclude Williams's, alias Herbert's story, and then enter on my own.

The law-suit came on last week in the King's Bench, and both the Mr. Herberts and Miss were obliged to attend. His

L 2

Lordship



Lordship was cast in the full damage and costs, likewise to remain in the King's Bench Prison till he can find sureties for his good behaviour for seven years, himself in a thousand pound, and two sureties in five hundred each, which it seems he is unable to obtain, as his house, horses, and furniture, must be sold to make good his damages. He would have escaped imprisonment had he not threatened vengeance on his prosecutors, which made his apprehension necessary. He has led this abandoned and dissolute course of life a number of years, and has run out an immense fortune, but no more of him.

Mr. Montague has declared his passion for Miss Herbert to his father, who approves it, provided he goes on his travels till he is of age, till which time he would have no young man enter on that holy state, as in his opinion he cannot before be a judge of his own passions, much less how to choose a partner for life, congenial with his own feelings and affections, without which the marriage state must be tasteless and insipid, if not miserable. Sir George has opened the affair to Mr. Herbert, who  
says

says he will leave his daughter entirely to her own disposal; sensible she will not make an improper choice, and that she shall have his consent whenever she chose to permit her lover to ask it. He has a high opinion of Mr. Montague, but Miss has not declared her final intention. It has certainly been a hard task to drive the lover from her mind; though she pays young Montague great respect, and he undoubtedly adores her, she has given him faint hopes that she will wait his return, but that does not altogether satisfy the fervent lover, they are but seldom apart, and Sir George declares his wish for the union.

Captain Williams set off express, on receiving an account of his adopted son, and a most affecting meeting took place between all the parties. Mrs. Herbert was in perfect raptures; and we thought would have devoured the good man with caresses for the singular preservation of her beloved son; Mr. Herbert was no less grateful; and it was altogether a happy company. Sir George had received an answer from the Captain's lady, full of

sorrow for her unbelief, and wishing she knew how to make any possible atonement for her offence, which she feared was now out of her power, since she had heard her unhappy husband was no more; that the rest of her life should be devoted to sorrow and penitence for the misery she had occasioned the best of men to suffer so many years; but she was determined, that the young man who had been the innocent occasion of all, should now share her tenderest regard, and be her sole heir, as the only reparation she could now make. Such were the contents of her letter, for Sir George had not let her know any thing about the Captain being alive. It is impossible to describe the Captain's joy on this occasion; he wished her presence, that he might again be restored to her arms, and embrace her with the same fervent ardor that he received her on their nuptial day, when no passion but the purest love existed betwixt them. He wrote a most pathetic letter, desiring her immediately to hasten his happiness, as he would wish it to be celebrated among his friends; or, if otherwise, he would immediately attend her

her wherever she thought proper. He sent it by express, and soon as she saw the purport of the letter, without making any difficulty, she set off at a very late hour, and hardly stopped charge of horses till she arrived at Sir George's seat, just when the family were retiring to rest. The meeting was joyful. And she on her knees implored his pardon, which was already granted, and retired after a small refreshment to recruit her spirits, almost overcome by the fatigue of travelling two whole nights and days to the dear object of her former resentment.

We had an early message desiring our company to dinner, and as soon as possible to join the once more happy couple.

We attended early, and the Captain's lady, who is really still a fine woman, received us with tears of joy, and a compunction for past errors recommended her to the pity and compassion even of young Herbert, who with the rest of the company exerted his best endeavours to calm the perturbation of her mind, and by dinner time we had so far succeeded, that



she appeared tolerably composed, and we hope speedily to restore her to perfect tranquility.

After dinner we begged the worthy Captain to recount his late adventures, which he with great complacency complied with. He began by observing, "That when he had sent the youth to college, time hung heavy on his hands, and having through the medium of a friend frequently, but in vain, applied to his now undeceived wife, life became burthen some to him, and he once more determined to plough the ocean, to divert his mind from those objects which perpetually preyed upon it while on shore. He therefore lodged a large sum of money in the hands of him he cherished as a friend, for the purpose of providing for Mr. Herbert, in case any accident should befall him—during the first part of his absence he received a very indifferent account of things, from this friend, but he now supposed him dead, as he could get no answer from him since his arrival in England."

Mrs.

Mrs. Williams assured her husband he was not dead, but for some time past had made her believe that the Captain was dead, and rendered her miserable by the most pressing importunities to become his wife, promising a large settlement, but disguising that he had any property of Mr. Williams's in his hands. Indeed he seldom mentioned his name, but with a view to prejudice Mrs. Williams against him; and hence proceeded her subsequent conduct with regard to her husband, and his adopted son. Nay, this insidious wretch even pretended that he knew the mother of the child, who he said always accompanied the Captain on his sea voyages.

Mrs. Williams now begged the Captain to proceed, and he resumed his history. "After we had been about six weeks at sea, we proceeded for Barbadoes, but were suddenly attacked by a pirate, who boarded us, after a stout resistance, and put us all in irons; they proved to be Algerines, and sailed for that inhospitable coast, where on landing we were permitted to clean ourselves from our filthy condition,

tion, previous to our being exposed for sale.—We were about fifty men, and four women passengers, and were well refreshed to set us off to advantage in the market, where there were plenty of purchasers; my lot was to fall to a merciless planter, at Barbadoes, by whom I was driven naked among his negroes, and my life was nearly exhausted by heat and fatigue, when Providence in its good pleasure softened the heart of my master's wife, who was an English woman, and she contrived a method to work my deliverance.

“ A neighbouring Planter told my master he had taken a great fancy to me, and wished much to make a purchase of me. My master asked him for what qualification he wanted me? He told him he thought I might make a good tutor to his children. Oh, said the brute, if he is fit for that I can employ him some time myself, for I have a large quantity of writing to do, and it will answer my purpose well to keep him. The wretch, however, made me do my daily task, and then, instead of rest, employed me in writing, or if not that a severe chastisement; the

the latter I often received, and was grown so emaciated by the severity of my daily task, and the intense heat of the climate, that I was unable to hold my pen: This continued for about ten months, my poor mistress all this while plotting the means of my escape, but in vain.—At length the young planter applied to his avarice, for that was his ruling passion, and by offering him three times my value, I was at last delivered up, and the wretch, though I could hold out but a short time longer, parted with me with all the pleasure imaginable; my worthy deliverer took me home, cloathed me and nourished me with the tenderness of a son, renovating my battered constitution, his amiable wife being my constant nurse. Till that was accomplished, their lovely children, a son and daughter, shewed an attachment for me, and I was now in daily expectation of being appointed their tutor. I would most willingly have performed this duty as far as my abilities, as I had no attachment but my adopted son, of whom, tho' I got permission to write, I could hear no tidings, which greatly distressed me. But



gracious Heaven can testify my surprise, when my friend, my deliverer, presented me with my freedom, and told me I was perfectly at liberty to go wherever I thought proper.

“ This event was undoubtedly joyful to me, but not so much so as if I had any dear connections lamenting my absence. My only care was for this young man, said he, because I had left no effort untried to regain her affection.”

Mrs. Williams then again accused his supposed friend as the author of all, declaring, had it not been for him protesting to her in the most solemn manner, that he was acquainted with the child's mother, and her being concealed in the ship; that nothing could ever have induced her to reject his generous offers, though she knew not the half of them. We all joined in condemning this villain, but as Mrs. Williams had his address, she thought it would be prudent to entrap him in a snare to his confusion; her scheme we approved, and she accordingly wrote him, that as he had made her such generous proposals, she thought she could not in honour

honour or decency give her hand without positive proof of her husband's death; if he could bring her that, she should be glad to see him as soon as possible. This had the desired effect, and about ten or twelve hours brought him to the door of Sir George Montague, who politely received him, and desired him to walk into an anti-chamber, while he acquainted Mrs. Williams with his arrival.

Sir George then introduced Mrs. Williams, while her husband was placed in a situation to discover the villainy of this pretended friend. Mr. ——— expressed the most rapturous joy at the sight of the lady, and Sir George made an offer to retire, but she begged he would not. “I have acquainted you with this gentleman's proposals,” said she, “and should be glad of your assistance and advice.” This he readily promised her. “Mr. ——— has made me generous offers, on condition of my becoming his wife; he assures me Capt. Williams is dead, and as I sent him word of the terms on which I would consent, I suppose, Sir, you have come prepared with  
“them.”

“them.” “Undoubtedly, Madam; the  
“most unequivocal.” “Oh, Sir,” said  
he, “the Captain was my friend but to  
“my knowledge a most wretched husband  
“he made; he cohabited with a woman,  
“who constantly went to sea with him,  
“and by whom he had a son whom he  
“idolized. To my sorrow I speak it, for  
“she was a distant relation of mine, and  
“the boy turned out a most vile profligate,  
“worthy the son of such a father and mo-  
“ther.” Sir George said, “I think in  
“charity, Sir, you ought to spare the  
“dead; perhaps the lady was in fault,  
“and did not return his affection as a  
“good wife ought to do; she best knows  
“how that might be, but I think a man  
“of that kind undeserving such a wife.  
“Was it you, Sir,” said Sir George, “that  
“the Captain appointed trustee to this  
“son.” “Me, Sir! believe me, if he  
“had, I would have spurned at it, though  
“my own relation.”—“And pray, Sir, do  
“you know if this man’s mother is alive  
“still?”—“Oh no, Sir, I held her in  
“such contempt, that I never enquired  
“after her; but probably she may be with  
“her

“her son, and it is unlikely either of them  
“should come to a good end.”—“Well,”  
said Sir George, “we’ll drop these un-  
“worthy people, and proceed to business.  
“You will be so obliging as to let me see  
“the account of the Captain’s death.”  
He pulled out a letter from his pocket,  
containing news of a battle in which the  
Captain was inhumanly murdered; they  
appeared satisfied, and Sir George enquir-  
ed concerning the settlements he pro-  
posed; which Mr. — very copiously  
enlarged upon, and produced copies of  
notes to a large amount, all of which he of-  
fered freely at the shrine of Hymen, desiring  
nothing so much as, by his tenderness and  
assiduity, to recompense the most amiable  
of women for the want of conjugal felicity  
in the early part of life. She thanked him  
for his zeal; but was afraid she should  
never be able to repay those unbounded  
marks of superior attachment.

He now ventured to lay hold of her  
hand and pressed it to his lips; he then  
begged Sir George to use his influence in  
his favour, who assenting thereto, the  
worthy Baronet withdrew. Mr. Monta-  
gue,



gue, who, with the Captain, had witnessed the discourse of this specious villain, wished the deception to be carried on till next day; as he hoped they might be enabled either to drive him from the house, or strike a terror through his conscience during the night.—The lady and her inamorata were summoned to supper, which surprised her much, she not being in the secret.—Lady Montague, her son, and the Captain, were highly diverted with the idea of the young gentleman's project, which was put in execution soon after Mr. M — was shewn to his bed-chamber.

This gentleman being thoroughly tired with the fatigue of his journey, bestowed little time in reflection, and hastily undressing himself, got into bed, fondly anticipating he should the next night be in possession of what he had so long coveted; but scarcely had he began to dose, when a form appeared with a lighted taper in each hand, dressed in long white flowing robes. The spectre was personated by the Captain himself; who addressed the starting, trembling wretch in the following pointed terms: “ False and perjured  
“ friend,

“ friend, I call on thee to answer with thy  
“ blood the loss of my dear adopted son,  
“ and of his mother also, whom, by thy  
“ vile practices thou hast brought to such  
“ shameful ends, wretch that thou art ;  
“ and now wantest to make my wife add  
“ adultery to her other crimes.—Speak,  
“ wretch ; and if thou canst justify thyself,  
“ I am permitted to hear thee.”

Half dead with fright, his terrors deprived him of utterance, till the Captain, in a voice of thunder, commanded him to speak, or prepare for instant death ; an electric shock succeeded, which had been previously planned ; this roused him from his reverie, and on his knees, he entreated the spirit of his departed friend to pronounce his pardon, and he would confess all. The spectre nodding assent, he thus began : “ I have been guilty of the greatest duplicity to both you, your wife, and supposed son. I confess I have wronged you much on that subject ; since I believe he is not your son, though I took great pains to instill it into your wife that he was, and also that I knew his mother. It is all false, and was  
“ only

“ only intended to answer my own abomin-  
“ able purposes. I have long loved your  
“ wife, and to that unlawful passion have  
“ sacrificed my veracity and honour, but  
“ never obtained her compliance with my  
“ wishes till now that she has given her  
“ consent to marry me; to facilitate which  
“ by a forged letter, I imposed your death  
“ upon her; and your thus appearing,  
“ convinces me of the truth of it, though  
“ I knew nothing of it before but from  
“ supposition in not hearing of you. Your  
“ son I know nothing of, having never re-  
“ mitted him the money you left, but was  
“ going to settle it on your wife as my  
“ own, thinking she had a greater right to  
“ it than any one else. This is the truth;  
“ therefore pardon me if thou canst, and  
“ leave me some hope and time for repen-  
“ tance, and drive not an unhappy man to  
“ despair. I will restore your son if I can  
“ find him, and inform him of your prop-  
“ erty, and make a confession of my crimes  
“ to your much-injured wife.”

“ Be it so,” said the Captain, “ but at  
“ thy peril, see my wife no more.—Send  
“ her the property, and leave your con-  
“ fession in writing; but let it be full and  
“ explicit,

“explicit, that she may not wonder at  
“your departure; and let the remainder  
“of your days be spent with probity and  
“justice. If you are sincere in your re-  
“pentance, let the widow and fatherless  
“have your protection, for that will be  
“well-pleasing in the sight of God, and  
“cover a multitude of your sins. Pre-  
“sume not to stay another night under  
“this roof; and if you fulfil not every  
“tittle of your promise, wherever you are,  
“there will I meet you. Farewel.”——

He then made a flourish with his light, while Mr. Montague gave him another electric shock, and he lay senseless on the bed. The Captain then gave the lights another flourish, then extinguished them, and disappeared.

Never was a more ludicrous scene, or perfidy more justly punished. As soon as he heard the servants stirring, he rang the bell for pen, ink, and paper, and pleaded indisposition for not attending breakfast; and when the ladies were gone out for an air, the poor wretch sent for a post chaise, and set off, no one appearing to be surprised, or wishing to hinder him. He left



left behind him a full and candid confession of all his base duplicity from the beginning, but concealed the cause of his sudden change of sentiments.

I have made a long epistle of this, in hope of entertaining you, and shall send the sequel in my next. My sister Austin is just arrived; and I strongly suspect it was Austin that behaved so well to our Captain; but I will not anticipate the pleasure it must give us.—We are all well, and beg to be remembered.

Your's,

R. W.

LETTER

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## LETTER XLVII.

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DUKE OF — TO SIR HARRY EVELYN.]

**T**HANKS, my dear friend, for your obliging attention and assistance at the late joyful celebration of our nuptials. I can assure you, from the little I have yet seen of conjugal happiness, I do not seem to require any time for repentance of the rash act; nor do the rest of the happy trio. We have spent a charming month at Townly's, and are now preparing for Captain——'s seat to finish our celebrity. Our *worthy* friends were present at Townly's ball; and I make no doubt, if possible, will meet us here, for a week at least; in that case we shall have nothing to regret, but your absence, which we have all lamented, more especially as it was occasioned by your father's illness; if he is better you must absolutely give us a peep, or we shall think your friendship

ship lessened, though you lent your helping hand to my, I may say our happiness. My wife sends her most respectful compliments to you, as do our friends, with whom we have just parted. I remain

Your's —

LETTER

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LETTER XLVIII.

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*LADY TOWNLY* TO *MRS. WILSON*.

DEAR MATILDA,

I WRITE to acquaint you that we are just returned from the Duke's fête, and ours, according to agreement, commences on Monday next, which we shall esteem as particularly favoured to have graced by your's and the Captain's company during the month, or longer, if possible: hope no excuse will prevent me from enjoying that happiness with the friend of my heart. Present my unfeigned love to all the happy party who are now enlivened by your presence, and persuade, if possible, every one to join the festive band in honour of hymen and felicity. The invitation, you know, is general, and therefore I need not be particular; but if they  
will



will not, or cannot tarry some part of the time, we must see you all.

I hear Mr. Warton's sister is arrived, and as what passes in your present party can only give her a faint idea of our domestic happiness, I cannot dispense with her presence at the approaching festival. The concert, provided you all perform your parts, must indeed be a treat to her, and I should hope the ball also would be pleasing; but I am running to a tedious length, so accept my Townly's respects, and believe me ever

Your's,

TOWNLY.

LETTER

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## LETTER XLIX.

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MR. MITFORD TO MR. WARTON.

I KNOW not how to express my thanks for your very entertaining letters, which awake every sensation of the feeling breast. Lord and Lady C—— have read them with pleasure, and my Georgiana is grateful as myself. In my Lord's name we beg you to bring Mrs. Austen to spend a few days previous to her going to Lord Townly's; indeed my Georgiana is so eager to see her sister, that I was half inclined she should be the bearer of this. I wonder not at her impatience, since fraternal affection shines so conspicuously amongst you. Before you read this therefore you will probably see her—— I beg you will give us the conclusion of the good Captain's history. We all applaud Mr. Montague's scheme, as much preferable to an appeal to the sword. We hope it will have its effect on the wretch who was the occasion of it. I beg my love and sincerest regard to all, and am

Your's,

R. MITFORD.

## LETTER L.

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*MR. WARTON TO MR. MITFORD.*

**I**N compassion to your forlorn situation, and in compliance with your request, I now proceed with my narrative. I must, however, previously thank you for the opportune manner in which you have favoured us with the company of your wife; it has been gratifying to her wishes as well as to those of Mrs. Austin; the children of the latter lady are two sweet little cherubs, who were exceedingly pleased at seeing their aunt. Present our respects to the good Lord and Lady C——, and we will do ourselves the pleasure of waiting on them when Lord Townly's ball is over, which we are pledged to attend, as also at the concert.—I will now resume the sequel of my story.

The Ladies, on their return home, were informed of Mr ——'s sudden departure, and the sealed paper he had left behind

behind him, was presented to Mrs. Williams, in which he minutely recapitulated the whole of his villainous practices, and adding that his conscience would suffer him no longer to carry on the deception.—May he live and mend.

Sir, George desiring our company at dinner, you may be sure we readily obeyed the summons. But before dinner, Mr. Herbert being walking with Mrs. Austin's children, they accidentally met Mr. Williams, whom the children instantly knew, and both at once exclaimed, "Our dear " Mr. Williams!"—He stood motionless with surprise, before he had power to embrace them, and when recovered from his astonishment, said, "Good Heavens, Mr. " Herbert, from whence have you brought " these little angels!"—He replied, "From " our common friend, Mr. Warton, who " is their mother's brother; they are " brought over here for their education " under Mr. Dean, whose wife, you know, " is another sister."———"My God!" exclaimed he, "is it possible that so near a " relation of his, who saved from ruin my " adopted son, should have preserved my



"existence, to bless the happy day when  
"first I knew a Warton."

"Well, my friend," said Mr. Herbert,  
"if you have cause to rejoice, what have  
"I, who owe to him both the preservation  
"of my long-lost wife, and the recovery  
"of my only son; at least next to you;  
"for to you I am indebted beyond mea-  
"sure, for your unexampled humanity, in  
"sacrificing the peace of domestic quiet  
"and happiness, to afford succour and  
"support to unprotected innocence."

"Enough," said Williams, "the father  
"of these sweet children rescued me from  
"slavery, freed me from the extreme of  
"misery to enjoy happiness before un-  
"known, again restored to the arms of  
"my wife, as dear to me as when I first  
"led her to the altar, rich in all the  
"charms of youthful innocence and beau-  
"ty, guarded from the perfidy of man,  
"and now connected by the bonds of  
"amity with those disinterested friends,  
"who only prize their own happiness in  
"proportion as they are conducive to it  
"in others. Where, my dears," added he,  
"is your papa and mama? I long to throw  
"myself

“myself at their feet. Are they at  
“Mr. Warton’s now?” “Oh,” said Richard,  
“if you want to do that, you must go to  
“Barbadoes, for my papa is there, but  
“my mamma is at uncle Warton’s; and I  
“am sure she will be glad to see you, for  
“they very often talked about you when  
“we were at home.”

They then returned to my house; and  
I hope my brother will not suppose I write  
these self-encomiums through vanity, but  
only to shew the powerful operations of gra-  
titude in these worthy men. The Captain  
came flying in with a child in each arm,  
crying out, “Where is she? Where is  
“she?”—You may remember, I anticipated  
this meeting, and wished to see the first  
interview, fortunately I was in the way,  
and immediately conducted him to my sis-  
ters, who were sitting together. On our  
entering the room, they got up; but the  
poor Captain was almost overcome with joy,  
and, dropping on his knee, seized with fer-  
vor the hand of my sister Austin, and bath-  
ed it with tears of joy.—She raised him  
with tenderness, expressing her happiness at  
seeing him, and her hopes that he had

met with more happiness since his return to his native land than he had done when she first had the pleasure of seeing him. He assured her he had, and that principally through the means of her brother.

After the mutual enquiries and congratulations had taken place, we returned to Sir George's to dinner, where a numerous and happy party were assembled, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, Mr. and Mrs. Dean, young Herbert and Miss, Captain Williams and wife, your better half and mine, Mrs. Austen and children, Captain Wilson and Matilda, Sir George, his lady, and son. We were all mirth and gaiety, and the last evening's affair was thoroughly canvassed. Mr. Montague received the general thanks for his ingenious contrivance; the electrical apparatus was exhibited, and the manner shewn by which its operations were directed to affect this guilty wretch. His confession was read, and contributed in no small degree to the satisfaction of the Captain and his Lady who found each other so different from what they before thought.

Indeed,

Indeed, a most chearful and agreeable day it was altogether; and we have some reason to think, Mr. Montague's pleasant contrivance did not lessen 'him in the esteem of Miss Herbert; he had many warm advocates in his behalf; but his own personal merit is his best recommendation.

We have almost persuaded Sir George to consent to his son's marrying before he set off on his travels, if he can get the consent of the fair one; who, if she has any objection to surmount, it is the partiality that still exists in her breast towards her brother; for she declares no attachment on earth is preferable to Mr. Montague's, whose mind and person she much esteems, though not with the passionate ardour of a lover. Sir George, however, reminds me of a story, I heard before I left England; for he says he would not have the marriage consummated till he returns.

The story I allude to runs something thus—A contract was entered into by the Noble Parents of a young couple, and the nuptial benediction given; both parties were very young, but remained together



in the house while preparations were making for the young gentleman's journey; when, lo! one morning his father, having risen earlier than usual, and wanting his son, who was not stirring, went to his chamber, and found he had not slept there that night, as the bed cloaths were in perfect order; he then ran to an elderly lady, the mother, aunt, or grandmother, I forget which, to inform her of the affair.—“What,” says the lady, “cannot you suppose where he is?”—“No, really,” says his Lordship, “I am frightened and have “no idea.”—She laughing, said, she would venture a *wager* she soon found him, and led him to the door of the young lady's chamber, which having opened, discovered the young married couple fast locked in each other's arms, in a dead sleep. The old gentleman stood astonished with surprise; and she asked him what he could have expected otherwise?—The consequence was her young Ladyship was sent to travel with her spouse; and perhaps, the best thing that could have happened, as it kept the youth from various dissipa-  
tions

tions into which he might otherwise have fallen. At the end of four years, the happy travellers returned, with three lovely children, and a fourth very near.

This story I related to Sir George, who laughed very heartily at it ; and the young ones were not without a blush on the occasion. We subjoined our wishes, that if Sir George would persist in having his son thus accomplished, Miss Herbert might accompany him as tutor, in character of Mrs. Montague.

We did not part early ; and wanted nothing but the company of you and your Noble Patrons to have made the party compleat. The noble Captain, for so I must call him, behaved with the greatest kindness to my sister Austin, who longs in person to greet you brother.

I think I have sufficiently lengthened out Williams's story ; therefore shall once more conclude, till after our meeting at Townly's ; and am, as all with us ever are,

Your's,

T. WARTON.

## LETTER LI.

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*MRS. AUSTIN, IN ENGLAND,*

TO

*MR. AUSTIN, IN BARADOES.*

I ARRIVED safe with my dear children on England's happy and my own native shore, but amidst the succession of happiness and pleasure which hourly surrounds me, I feel there is something wanting to complete that felicity I cannot enjoy so perfectly as I ought without sharing it with my best beloved, whose presence alone is wanting to render this place a perfect elysium; its inhabitants my dear relations, who have added others equally dear to me, by the uncommon love and kindness they show for me and mine.

I have been present at a Fête given by Lord Townly to the Duke of ———, mentioned in my sister Dean's letter, and Captain Conway, who was married to Miss Huet, of whom also mention was made at that

that time, which three charming couple were united at once, Lord Townly to Miss Foster, a friend of Mr. Mitford's family ; the Duke of —— to a Miss L——, a most accomplished lady ; we were present at a concert, exactly similar to the description Maria gave us of theirs, and was really divine. Every one bore a part either with the instrument or voice : The ball was elegant in the extreme, and very numerous, but did not afford me so much real pleasure as the concert, which was carried on in a manner as near as possible to my Lord G—— and my brother's, which these noble gentry imitate in every thing, hoping to obtain and keep pace with them in domestic felicity. I think it would be tedious to repeat it, as Maria gave us so full a description before.

I have not yet mentioned what has much more surprised and delighted me, than all these fine things, the sight of Mr. Williams, who is one of us, and who in the person of my brother's chaplain, has found that adopted son he used to talk of with so much tenderness ; but above all, what will astonish you, that this said Chaplain is son to our ever dear mother,



Mrs. Herbert, who has also found her long lost husband, and are all of our happy party.

I beg and entreat my dearest husband, if possible to settle his affairs in a manner that will leave him at liberty to come to prove the happiness I inform him of. The much loved Herbert, whom I know you esteem as much as we do, what pleasure will it be to you to see that dear woman, who has been so tender, so good to us all, when without a mother; to see her, I say, happy in her much lamented husband and most amiable son, both in thought dead, but by the wonderful interposition of Providence preserved, all of them preserved, to render each other happy.

Inclosed I send you a full account of the manner in which these surprising incidents were discovered, as my sister Dean has wrote it down, for she is principal secretary, being fond of her pen. As to Selina, my brother's wife, she is a paragon of perfection, and indeed he was a happy man to reserve himself till he came where such excellence only can be found. Mr. Mitford's elder sister is also a matchless and incomparable woman, and the  
Captain

Captain to whom she is united, is an amiable and accomplished man. 'Lord and Lady C—— are too great for me to attempt to describe— So much elegance, order, sobriety, benevolence and humanity, marks the whole of their conduct, that they may be truly said to be more than human.

We left these three happy couple to finish their month's mutual agreement, that they should be married at the Duke's, and stop the first month, repair to Lord Townly's at the expiration of that, and stay another, when they should complete the festivity at Captain Conway's by another month.

Heaven grant them all a likeness to that happiness they so fervently imitate and so richly deserve; and that they may never know less than you and your ever loving, faithful, affectionate wife,

AUSTIN.

All our dear friends salute you, and the children, and pray for your coming among us—Adieu.

LETTER

## LETTER LII.

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*MR. WARTON TO MR. MITFORD.*

MY DEAR BROTHER.

**I** SIT down to relate that new history which in the beginning of our correspondence I thought might have been agreeable to you, little imagining all those pleasing occurrences would have protracted what I now feel quite indifferent to, from the present taste and relish I have of superior bliss; such as it is, however, you, and no one so much as you, are welcome to. My father, you know, whose inexperience rendered him an easy prey to designing villainy, soon became what the world calls a bankrupt, but without distressing his creditors; his personal estate was about one thousand per annum, and my mother brought him a neat twenty thousand, sterling. Some few years he went on very comfortably during which  
time

time my mother brought me and my three sisters into the world; but imbibing a notion of speculation, and dabbling in the Alley, without being sufficiently versed in the art, soon became a prey to the *black legged* gentry, who not content with stripping him in this way, found means by suffering him to win a little at first at the game of hazard, to engage him to lay a larger sum, till his imprudence got the better of his reason, and he completely ruined himself, before his eyes were open to the danger he had precipitately plunged himself into. Being naturally of a tender disposition, and a fond father and husband, his mind became a prey to despair, and the thought of having brought to distress a wife he tenderly loved, soon brought on a fever, which terminated his existence, and left a disconsolate widow and four children, to deplore his loss.

My father having no relations that she could apply to for assistance, my dear mother soon became the victim of disordered reason; she had a brother a rich Planter at Barbadoes, who was unmarried, and who commissioned a friend to  
dispose



dispose of us as he thought proper. My unhappy mother was put under the care of the faculty, and after about four years recovered her reason in a tolerable degree. My uncle then sent word that he should be glad if we were all to come and settle with him, which my mother gladly consented to. I was about ten years old, when my father died, and was now near fifteen, when I left school, my sister Austin about twelve, Georgiana ten, and Maria eight; we arrived safely there, and were treated by the good man in the tenderest manner.—Our education was continued as if our father had still lived in his former prosperity. Two years having thus elapsed, my mother paid the great debt of Nature, from a melancholy which had preyed on her spirits since the time of my father's death. Another year and a half deprived me of my uncle, who had in every respect acted a father's part. I was then near twenty; and as my uncle had early initiated me in business, was perfectly capable of managing every thing belonging to it. I found myself master of fifty thousand pounds in cash, with every prospect of increasing it.

About

About this time a cargo of slaves happened to arrive; and, as I had always been accustomed in my uncle's time, went to examine them, lest they should have been basely betrayed or filled a station too high to be degraded by such unworthy employment, in such case to become their purchaser, and restore them to their friends and wonted liberty, despising every interested maxim, he thought acts like these were acts of humanity, that made him prosper beyond many of his neighbours, who were governed by other principles. Be it as it might, I was determined to follow his steps in every good work; conscious that it would always bear self-examination. Providence particularly favoured me at this period, by directing me to a place where I found a ship's crew, passengers and all, who had been taken by an Algerine pirate, and carried into their port, which were fortunately purchased by merchants trading in that inhuman traffic, and brought to that place for the plantation work. I surveyed them, and found a beautiful woman among them, a Captain of an English vessel, and an African Chief, all of which in a particular

cular manner claimed my pity. I found their price high, but I purchased them, with several others of less note, who were not for our sultry climate. I brought them home, and gave them their liberty, with choice to remain with me, or go where ever they thought proper; the African proved a Prince who had been seized while on a hunting party; his tribe were powerful, and he rich, and had left behind him a large family. Impressed with gratitude, which his tears bespoke, he then set off for his native country, where he arrived in safety, and soon after sent me a most magnificent present I by no means desired. The Captain tarried with me for some time, with whose company I was very much delighted and edified; but what attached me most to him was, that he had preserved the female I mentioned from perishing in a watery grave; this female was no other than our dear Mrs. Herbert. I was particularly charmed with her appearance, and really felt a something more than bare esteem for her—She seemed overwhelmed in melancholy; and when I entreated her permission to let me contribute to her future tranquility,

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lity, by acquainting her friends with her situation, in a feeling manner, she addressed me as follows :

“ Alas, Sir, I have no friends, no one  
“ but Captain Mansel and yourself; he  
“ preserved me from the impetuous ocean,  
“ and you from I know not what scenes  
“ of distress and misery. My beloved  
“ husband and son perished in the storm, in  
“ which the generous Captain, at the ut-  
“ most hazard of his life, seeing our  
“ distress from his own ship, boldly ven-  
“ tured in a small boat, and happily res-  
“ cued me from the jaws of impending  
“ death. But, oh ! what a scene of wretch-  
“ edness was I reserved for !—What com-  
“ plicated misery and woe !—A widow and  
“ childless in one fatal moment !”—Here  
grief overpowered her tender frame, and  
she sunk motionless on her seat. The  
Captain and myself only were at this time  
with her, but we found the aid of females  
necessary, and my sisters, by procuring  
what was necessary, brought this amiable  
woman to herself. We forbore any more  
enquiries then ; but endeavoured, as much

as



as possible to alleviate; but she seemed inconsolable. However, I made an effort, as far as was in my power, by offering her myself and fortune, which she most gratefully and modestly rejected, assuring me her affections were so inalienably fixed on her late husband and son, that she was fully and resolutely determined to remain a widow through life; for it would be a violation of her feelings, as abhorrent to her principles, to yield her hand, where she could not bestow her heart; therefore, however flattering the prospect might be, she would never deceive any one in so momentous an affair.—Notwithstanding, she said, if I could employ her in any service of which she was capable, she would esteem it a favour deserving of her lasting gratitude.

I then asked her, as a matter of form, if she was acquainted with any language beside her native one; and to my infinite surprise, found she was perfect Mistress of French, Italian, and German, and was likewise a proficient in music. Judge of my sensations, oh, my friend, at this discovery  
—I immediately

—I immediately made her an offer of being Governess to my sisters, with every comfort in my power to procure. She readily assented to my proposal, with only one proviso, which was, that I should never more mention the other subject; this I faithfully promised, and as religiously observed, which plainly shews the wise interposition of Providence in the most dark and mysterious matters. Had she yielded to my entreaties, what a train of unforeseen evils would have ensued!—Whereas by her virtuous refusal, and laudable perseverance, how much happiness have we both experienced?

I was in need of a person thus qualified, to undertake the care of my sisters: They were happy with my choice, and made great progress under her; and you, my friend, have been a witness of their accomplishments. We lived in the greatest harmony imaginable, till finding my fortune increase so rapidly, that I began to wish myself in my native land, and accordingly concerted the measures most likely to facilitate my purpose; but this business  
cost

cost me more pains than I expected ; for I wanted to part with my effects only to one who would still preserve the custom I had been taught by my uncle to revere.

I waited long in vain, well knowing that planters are too hardened by their barbarous traffic to possess much humanity. I at length made choice of a young man, whom I had purchased in my uncle's time, whose humane disposition recommended him to my notice. He had some time been my principle assistant ; and evinced great partiality for my eldest sister, who at times, I discovered, seemed to regard him with favour. I immediately set about knowing the real inclination of both parties. My sister ingenuously confessed her attachment ; for, I am proud to say, all my sisters are of an open and candid disposition. I told her I had no objections to her choice ; and that though my intentions were to revisit England, however much I might regret leaving her behind, if it contributed to her happiness, and the young man answered my expectations, she should have my hearty consent.

I then

I then repaired to him, determined he should not know the conversation that had passed between us. I asked him if he had any thoughts of settling, provided he was accommodated with the means; that I thought of returning with my sisters to England; and that if I could be of any service to him, I would gladly assist him.—He stood silent, and looked confused; at length he replied, “oh, Sir, “I labour under such an infinitude of “obligations to you already that more I “dare not ask.”—I assured him I differed with him much on that head, as it would be pleasing to me to be serviceable to him, as his fidelity and integrity had rendered him worthy any favour I could bestow. He looked at me with astonishment, and bursting into tears said, “I dare “not, I cannot ask—the only favour on “earth I could wish or desire—the presumption is too great—my tongue will “not utter it”—I begged him to dissipate his fears, observing there had never been any thing so rigid in my behaviour towards him as to justify so timid an apprehension  
—He



—He stopped me short——“Sir, no man  
“ever infringed the laws of hospitality  
“as I have done.”—I enquired in what  
manner, and gave him my word of honour  
as a man to pardon any breach he could  
possibly have committed against me; there-  
fore desired him to look on me as a friend,  
ready to aid and assist him under any difficul-  
ty.—I paused to give him time to consider  
of his answer.—He then replied, “Oh, Sir,  
“I know I must become the victim of your  
“displeasure.” I rather rebuked him for  
having so little confidence in my word, and  
keeping me in unnecessary suspense. He  
then made an effort to fall on his knees,  
which I prevented. Disappointed in this, he  
cried, “Sir, your goodness is too great; but  
“if you will permit me the use of pen and pa-  
“per, I will inform you of the truth.”  
Readily assenting to his request, I desired  
him to retire, that he might do it  
with more composure and recollection.

I own I was pleased with his modesty as it  
indicated an honest heart; but though I ap-  
proved of him for a brother-in-law, I could  
not make him a tender of my sister's person.  
In this dilemma I was undetermined what  
to

to do, or what offer to make him when he disclosed his mind. At length his bell rung, and a servant presented the letter, which his timidity would not allow him to do himself. The best idea I can give you of it is a copy, which is as follows :

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## LETTER LIII.

*MR. AUSTIN TO MR. WARTON.*

SIR,

**W**ITH the keenest sense of my demerits, I scarcely dare hope your pardon, when I inform you that, by an unhappy passion, which my nature was incapable of resisting, I have robbed your sister of a heart, of which I am in every respect unworthy. Believe me, Sir, was the world in my possession, I would freely sacrifice it at the shrine of my divinity ; but, after this declaration, in obedience to your request, my most sanguine expectations can hardly presume on your forgiveness : I have, however, one favour to beg, which I flatter myself you will grant, that your amiable sister may enjoy your pity and fraternal

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sympathetic regard, for permitting so unfortunate an ingrate as myself to obtrude on her affections.

In whatever part of the terraqueous globe my doom may be fixed, my prayers shall be offered up to the Lord of the Universe for your welfare; whilst, with the most profound humility, I subscribe myself,

Your most faithful servant,

WILLIAM AUSTIN.

I was astonished at the humility expressed by this young gentleman, and charmed with his exalted notions of gratitude; yet I was displeased with his appearance of terror on the disclosure of this circumstance, therefore wrote as follows :

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### LETTER LIV.

*MR. WARTON TO MR. AUSTIN.*

SIR,

**I** MUST need confess myself astonished at the contents of your letter; but see no absolute need of banishing you from my sight; I ought to lay most blame on my sister

ter for not consulting me on her choice, but I shall take no mean revenge on either; since heaven be praised I am taught to forgive an injury, as I hope to be forgiven.

We must part, indeed, but not in that angry manner you seem to intimate. First, I wish to give you a little advice; for which purpose I request your attendance in my study two hours hence at farthest, which time I give you to recollect yourself, and hope you will never give me cause to call you any other than friend, which I still profess myself to be.

T. WARTON.

I immediately wrote a note to a clergyman of the parish, and a particular friend of mine, to favour me with their company in an hour or two, and to bring with him a licence and ring, as I thought I should have occasion for his assistance in that time, but which at present required secrecy. I then repaired to my sisters, who with their amiable tutoresses, were employed embroidering. I desired them to lay aside their work, as I had something particular to communicate.——“My dears,” said I, “Mr. Austin and myself have had some  
“talk about an affair which this letter will



"best explain. Pray," said I, after they had perused it, "has any other lady knowledge of this affair?" My sister answered she had mentioned it to no person living. Mrs. Herbert assured me it was the first moment she had heard of it; but hoped I would consider the youth and inexperience of the parties. Mr. Austin, she said, she had ever considered as a deserving young man, and wished his situation in life had entitled him to the hand of the young lady; but love, like death, levels all distinctions, and makes reason merely the hand-maid of passion. Certain, however, it is, that young people should endeavour to extinguish the first spark, lest its raging violence should increase beyond the controul of prudence or discretion.

I then desired they would prepare to take leave of him, as he would attend presently for that purpose. "And particularly you," said I, to my now trembling sister, who faintly articulated, "Oh, brother, is the unfortunate youth going?" I answered I had not asked him, nor would it be very prudent for her. She briskly replied, "I would willingly know, for I would gladly wander over the world with him."

“him. Unfortunate young man,” said she, “to what have I reduced you!— Oh, “gracious Heaven! what will become of “him, when banished from me, who am “sensible how dear I am to him! My own “misery will be insupportable from a recollection of his sufferings. Yet I cannot “brother, cruel as you are, upbraid you “who have been to me a father, brother, “and every thing, but what this dear “man might have been, had fortune been “propitious to my wishes, or I enabled to “procure for him only the common necessities of life!”

I own I felt the force of her expressions; and was happy in the time approaching, when I might convince these faithful lovers I was not so inexorable as they imagined. Poor Austin sent a respectful message, acquainting me that he waited my pleasure. My sister had fainted away, but was now recovered, and seated on a sofa, drowned in tears. I was offended that she had not asked my consent, having ever treated her with brotherly tenderness, from which she might conclude, I would on no account obstruct her happiness. My uncle recommended my sisters to my protection, but left me sole master

master of his property ; but notwithstanding this, I ever meant to be a just and faithful steward to them.

Poor Austin now appeared, and seemed much shocked at seeing her in that situation. I desired him to try if he could alleviate her grief, which he readily did, supposing himself the cause, for which he expressed his sorrow, and wished his life could atone for it, as he would tender that a willing sacrifice for her happiness. For that I said there was no occasion ; if they had acted imprudent, they were both young enough to make amends for their fault. I then asked him if he had fixed upon any place to settle in, telling him if he had, I should make a point of assisting him. He respectfully answered, and said, he had done his utmost in my service, and I had ten fold repaid him, for doing no more than what was his duty ; and that if me and mine, were absent, all places were alike indifferent to him ; that his affections were divided among us, and a separation must make him miserable. I told him I had some thoughts of quitting the island in a year or two, and should I want a steward, he might depend

depend on the preference, if he could conquer this unfortunate attachment. He said, he was entirely at my disposal, and would do any thing to serve me ; but would rather accept the meanest place in my household to be with me, than all my possessions to stay behind.

I was rather struck at this instance of attachment ; but recollecting myself, said, " well young man, I wish not so much to make you rich as to make you happy ; therefore I will make one more proposal, which you may accept or not, as you best like. I have observed the mutual affection of you and my sister, and if you consent to manage for me till you can remit me a sum not under two thousand pound per annum, should my sister, after her arrival in England, not attach herself to any one else, and you both remain in the same mind, I will offer no impediment to your union. Mr. Austin shed the tear of gratitude. I told them they should have a quarter of an hour to accept or reject my offer. I then withdrew with Mrs. Herbert and my other two sisters, and I endeavoured to hear if they had any better opinion of me than they had before this interview.

He



He looked at his watch and said, "oh, my much beloved angel, what hopes and fears by turns assail us—our moments are few——oh, direct me what to say, for I will be guided by your direction. Your brother has made the sum so small in proportion to his receipts, that it will probably be double the given sum the first year. Shall I, my love, accept this generous offer, or will you doom me to despair?"—He then took her hand and gently pressed it to his breast—"why speakest thou not, my guardian angel, remember our time is almost expired," she fell in his arms, overwhelmed with grief. "I cannot," said she, "bear one year's separation——should I consent, my frame would soon decay, and make me the victim of despondency; ask my brother's consent; and if he refuse it, I will go with you to whatever part of the globe you think proper."—A tender embrace closed this interesting scene, when we re-entered—"Well, Sir," said I, "what now is your determination? Can you wait my time?"—"The task, Sir, is too hard for this lovely and amiable woman; she

she cannot endure the idea of a separation; therefore on our knees we entreat and employ your consent to our mutual wishes." "Rise," said I, "my brother; rise my dear sister; if you at first had asked that one question, it would have prevented you both much pain.—You have my consent, and Heaven grant you happiness equal to your affection. But have you so considered the nature of this solemn engagement, as to preclude the probability of after repentance." "Oh, brother," said the dear girl, who was now all vivacity, "I cannot change, and I am sure Austin never will."—"I must have the advice of the Reverend Mr. Waring," said I, "on this occasion, lest I do wrong. Maria desire the good man to walk in." He being introduced, after the usual ceremonies, I acquainted him with the affection of the young couple, and asked him if he thought such early attachments promised long duration? He replied, "Not always; but hoped in the present instance it would, for he had long admired the worth and excellence of both parties; therefore if his advice was necessary, he should give his affirmative in the most unequivocal

“ unequivocal manner, by recommending  
“ an instant and irrevocable union.”

“ Say you so,” said I, “ Then I think  
“ myself fully bound to take your advice :  
“ What say you, Mr. Austin, are you  
“ willing to take this sister of mine imme-  
“ diately, for I am like the Doctor here, a  
“ lover of dispatch ? If you love her, take  
“ her, and nothing shall be wanting on my  
“ part to render you both happy—What  
“ says my sister—are you ready to take Mr.  
“ Austin for life ?” “ How many days  
“ brother,” said she, “ will you allow me  
“ to make the necessary preparations ?” “ I  
“ see,” cried the Doctor, “ we shall here have  
“ the old adage verified, that when one is  
“ willing the other declines—But what  
“ say you, Mr. Austin, to Mr. Warton’s  
“ question ?”

“ Sir,” answered the young man, “ I am  
“ so lost in wonder and gratitude, that the  
“ whole appears illusion—I cannot however  
“ hesitate to declare, that all my hopes of  
“ earthly felicity are centered in that  
“ amiable lady, nor will it ever be in my  
“ power to repay so much unmerited good-  
“ ness.”

“ Well, Miss,” said the Doctor, “ Here is  
“ a man

“a man ready to take you for better for  
“worse, will you, or will you not?”—  
“When, Doctor? not so soon as to-morrow.  
“I will not be ashamed to own my love for  
“Mr. Austin; but I see no such immediate  
“hurry as that.”—“Oh,” said he, “Miss,  
“I do not mean to-morrow; do you, Mr.  
“Warton?”—“To-morrow! No,” said I,  
“the saying is, to-morrow never comes;  
“I mean to-night, with your leave and  
“assistance.”—“I, Sir, am ready instantly  
“to perform my office. Here, Mr. Austin,  
“is a ring, here is a licence, and here is  
“a prayer-book.” Mr. Austin bowed,  
and Miss, to be sure, gave a great scream  
and a blush. But the Doctor said, “We  
“will give you half an hour more to pre-  
“pare yourself. Mr. Warton gives you  
“away, your sisters are bride’s maids, and  
“we shall make a happy party at supper.”  
She again blushed, and the Doctor and I  
retired to take a glass; while the young  
folks were all in a bustle. The half hour  
being expired, we returned to the library;  
the dear girl had been weeping, but I sup-  
pose they were tears of joy she shed. With  
a little modest reluctance I gave her hand;  
her heart she had before disposed of to the  
best



best of men. When the ceremony was over, I embraced her with rapture, and sincerely congratulated her on the choice she had made. Happy Austin could not disguise the exultations of his mind. We spent the evening in a most agreeable manner; I postponed my intentions with respect to them for the present; and the rising Sun next day welcomed the bridegroom to his usual avocations.

At breakfast we met the lovely bride, heightened with every graceful charm. We congratulated the happy pair on their union, and there was a general day of rest among our slaves and domestics. Mrs. Herbert contributed no small share to our mirth; for she loved my sister as her own child, and esteemed Austin for his exemplary conduct and irreproachable integrity. I informed him of my intention to return to England when he was settled. The conditions, that he should remit me one half of the produce of the plantation during my life, the other half he should receive as dowry with my sister; but if on my demise, I left a son, the same sum should be continued to him; if only daughters, they should receive one thousand pound each, to the number of  
ten,

ten, or that sum to be divided among as many or few as should survive me, but that there should be no other incumbrances than as before-mentioned. To these stipulations he chearfully agreed, only observing it was too much to trust so young a man with, as it would soon enable him to become as rich as myself. I told him I wished no other ; strictly, however, enjoining him to keep up my uncles's custom of restoring unfortunate captives to their liberty, when they appeared deserving of the blessing ; that I should remain on the island till I was satisfied of the manner in which he meant to conduct himself in this particular—I staid, and thank Heaven, found his actions were regulated by the purest principles of humanity and universal benevolence.

Ten months, to our great joy, presented me with a nephew ; and another twelve-month brought me forth a niece. After seeing my sisters health perfectly re-established, I began seriously to think of returning to England ; I accordingly made various remittances of my immense treasure ; and about three years after my sister's nuptials,

nuptials, left Barbadoes. The sequel you well know.

I have omitted many striking passages in my history, which your alliance with Georgiana renders unnecessary, she being minutely acquainted with every circumstance attending our affairs. What I have written will therefore I hope suffice. I expect you will soon see Mr. Austin in England; his wife being near her time, we are all anxious for his being present at her lying in—Selina begins to complain; and I think we bid fair to have as many christenings as we had weddings. Two of the village couples have got the start of us, and there is no doubt but the Duke of—— will be as good as his word, in standing sponsor for the first child, as also Lord—— to the other. I am happy to see so laudable an alteration in these noble personages, though they do us the honour of attributing both change and happiness to us.

The perfidious Mr.—— sent the various sums he had purloined to Mrs. Williams; and what I am sorry to hear, though punishment ever awaits such complicated crimes, the wretch, stung with remorse, on  
hearing

Hearing Captain Williams was alive, put an end to his existence!—Horrid effect of insatiable avarice and treachery!

Sir George Montague has given his consent to his son's marriage, who, at length, by unwearied attention, has awoke that tenderness in Miss Herbert's heart, she had so unhappily, though innocently, placed on another. Sir George has left it to his own option to travel or not, as he thinks proper. The nuptials are to be celebrated in a fortnight's time—Young Mr. Herbert to join their hands, who still continues to perform his sacred functions with me.

Lord—— the wretch to whom Mrs. Herbert owes her unhappiness, as I informed you, not being able to find bail, flew to liquor to drown reflection, and became a prey to excess, without one tear of pity for his loss, excepting only as he was unprepared to meet the Majesty of Heaven. Captain Wilson and Matilda stays with us another month, and will then repair to you; they seem to improve each other; the Captain is an ornament to his profession; he is in a new raised regiment and supports the dignity of Colonel without the austerity of a disciplinarian; he is strict but mild; his orders  
are



are peremptory, but not severe; he is, in short, what every soldier ought to be, and tempers justice with mercy; a man of honour and a real Christian, like his great predecessor by his mother's side, the immortal Colonel Gardiner.

My schools, heaven be praised, increase and flourish; and Sir George Montague, with many of our rich neighbours are become voluntary Subscribers, and with each child they present, they give the annual sum of ten pounds, which enables us to take more children than our own manor afforded. I have not a doubt but it will soon become an object of national utility, as I have already a ship in forwardness for the boys to be instructed in the practical part of seamanship—I therefore flatter myself, that in the course of eight or ten years, I shall with the assistance of my neighbours, who have offered a large subscription for the purpose, be enabled to build, and completely man, from our infant seminary, a ship of war that may do honour to his Majesty's service. We have a number of tractable and promising young lads, who have been picked up as poor vagrants, having no proper employment, of the age of sixteen or seventeen, who

with

with the instructions they will receive, may become an ornament instead of a disgrace to their country.

Captain Williams, and both the Mr. Herberts, assist me in all my projects, and as there seems a sincere and firm attachment among the ladies, there is no fear of any wishing to separate. Mr. Herbert is building a house very near me, but we shall find a difficulty to part with them at all. The Captain has taken one within a mile, which he is fitting up, but at present he is with his wife at Sir George's. We seldom miss a day without being all of a party, and it is my peculiar happiness to say, I have found more substantial and true happiness, since my arrival in England, than I thought this world capable of giving; but am convinced that the Great Disposer of all gives a blessing in a superior degree, both of outward and inward satisfaction, where the talent given is appropriated to humane purposes; and what greater pleasure is there than in making those under us partake the comforts and enjoyments of life.

To those noble and worthy personages, Lord and Lady C—— how much does the world stand indebted? Their example has set a lesson to the Nobility and Gentry  
around

around them, who are not only mended in their own morals, but become promoters of virtue, learning and universal charity.

Oh, happy were it for England did these noble examples extend their influence throughout the Great World, vice and immorality would no more blot the historic page, and religion and virtue would facilitate our pursuits after happiness. How pleasing must be the death bed reflection, to think that we have been good and faithful stewards of our possessions?—That instead of dissipating our fortunes in folly and extravagance, we have made them subservient to the purposes of charity and brotherly love?—This reflection will alone soften the bed of pain, and lessen the terrors of death—Contrast this with the situation of the dying wretch, who, tortured with consciousness of a mis-spent life, wishes to recall the precious moments he has lost, that by repentance he may appease the anger of an offended God—who trembling on the threshold of eternity, dreads the moment that must sink him down its awful precipice. No less true is it that virtue has its own reward, than that vice bears its own punishment.

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I have been led into these reflections by a retrospect of the fate of the infamous Lord —, and that of the no less dishonourable Mr. —. While around this fruitful and happy spot, we see nothing but an emulation of virtue among the Gentry—who are husbands to the widows and fathers to the fatherless—rearing the infant poor by incitements to industry, and discouraging vice and incontinence, by promoting matrimony, and raising a numerous posterity to bless those through whose benevolence they have been made useful or valuable members of society—Pardon me, if I have said any thing contrary to your opinion, or my Lord C——'s; to him I beg leave to offer my grateful acknowledgments, for having taught me by his example my duty towards God and man. To the Rev. Mr. Spicer I also return my sincere thanks for every instance of his favour and affection for me and mine, and to all who have been instrumental to the public good.

All our friends and connections join in love with me to you and Georgiana. Mr. Dean is exemplary as a man and a minister in his parish; he is made almost an idol among his flock; his humility and humani-  
ty



ty go hand in hand ; to the sick he is a physician ; to the healthy a wise counsellor ; and to the wicked a mild scourge, drawing by the force of love those over whom reason has no influence. To the good, of whatever rank, he is not only an engaging but an edifying companion. Maria's first letter, after her arrival in England, gave me an impression favourable to his character and her own judgment. I am happy to add, she is to him such a wife as he deserves.— We may rank ourselves among the peculiar favourites of Heaven, to have been so blessed in our several partners.

I now expect some particular business, which may for some time suspend our literary communications. You partly know the cause. Our next public meeting I suppose will be to fulfil our agreement entered into at my Lord C—'s, relative to baptism ; till when, may bliss, without alloy, be the portion of you and your's. This is the fervent wish of

Your sincere friend,

T. WARTON.



FINIS.

